



BULLETIN

OF THE

MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM

EDITED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

4

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND SOUTH INDIAN SCRIPTS

BY

C. SIVARAMAMURTI, M.A.

Superintendent

Archæological Section, Indian Museum, Calcutta

NEW SERIES—*General Section, Vol. III, No. 4, 1952*

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KARAIKUDI. S. I. R.

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COAST GUARD

| NO. | NAME | AGE | SEX | STATUS | RESIDENCE | EDUCATION | RELIGION | POLITICAL | PROFESSION | REMARKS |
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SAW. GANESAN
KARAIKUDI. S. I. R.

DEDICATED with affection and esteem to my brother-in-law.

Sri P. N. RAMACHANDRAN, B.A., under whose fostering care I grew up and
had my education, and to my friend.

Sri K. V. RAMACHANDRAN, B.A., who broadened my aesthetic vision.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WHEN studying epigraphy I keenly felt the necessity of knowing at a glance on the same chart the development of each individual letter of the Indian alphabet in different areas and during centuries in different types of script developed from the same parent stock. I, therefore, prepared a genealogical tree for each letter of the alphabet for comparing the stages of development of the various scripts of India in general and South India in particular. The late Rao Bahadur Dikshit was interested in this scheme of presentation of palæography and advised me to complete the work giving it all my attention. As I had seen my book on Amaravati sculpture through the press in the meantime I was free to devote myself to this. I suggested to Dr. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, that I would prepare this book on Indian epigraphy and South Indian scripts. He readily agreed and the permission of Government was sought and obtained. In the meantime I planned the book with illustrations showing the earliest representations in sculpture of manuscripts, signatures, seals with legends, ornamental letters, shell characters, and so forth. Having long felt that it was essential to give select passages from inscriptions not only to provide a sort of exercise for the student to attempt reading them, but also with an idea of showing the literary beauty of composition in epigraphy, I have given select pieces with all the letters carefully drawn from the facsimiles. As however the literary beauty of epigraphy requires to be explained at some length I have devoted a chapter for it. The influence of our scripts abroad specially in South East Asia has been considerable and I have also dealt with it. The scribe, document, seal, so essentially related to the official mode of writing and record has been discussed, as also ornamental varieties of letters. Epigraphy being usually a neglected subject, I have discussed the value and need for its study in the introductory chapter. The plates given at the end represent some of the valuable originals in the epigraphical collection of the Madras Government Museum. The constant kind enquiries from England about the progress of this book by Dr. Gravely, retired Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, whose very kind interest in my work has been a great encouragement has in no small measure helped me to progress in this in spite of various pressing items of work in my rearrangement of the Archæological galleries of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, where I was in the meantime posted early in 1946. Dr. R. E. M. Wheeler, the Director General of Archæology in India, warmly

encouraged me in this work and exhorted me to finish this alongside with the gallery work of the Indian Museum. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji whose overwhelming kindness made me at once feel at home in Bengal has also kindly expedited me in this. I am thankful to Dr. R. C. Majumdar for giving me a reprint of his paper on the development of scripts in Annam which was helpful in the preparation of my chart showing the development of Indian scripts abroad. The magnificent works of Bühler, Ojha, Fleet, the volumes of *Epigraphia Indica*, *South Indian Inscriptions*, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, *Indian Antiquary* and other journals and books have all been of immense help in my work. A bibliography is added at the end. It is a great pleasure to me to convey my thanks to all my friends who have been very kind to me in my study of epigraphy particularly Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra, Mr. M. Somasekhara Sarma and Mr. V. Prabhakara Sastri. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to Mr. T. N. Ramachandran who at the instance of our revered Professor Mahamahopadhyaya S. Kuppaswami Sastriar very kindly introduced me to the study of Archæology after my graduation from the Sanskrit Department of the Presidency College. To Dr. Aiyappan I am extremely thankful for his personal interest in expediting the publication. In conclusion I warmly thank Mr. Bhudev Mukherji for his ready help in the preparation of the typed manuscript for the press. To Mr. Asoke Kumar Bhattacharyya I am grateful for readily undertaking the preparation of the Index.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL SECTION, INDIAN MUSEUM,
Calcutta, the 5th January 1948.

C. SIVARAMAMURTI.

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND SOUTH INDIAN SCRIPTS

BY

C. SIVARAMAMURTI, M.A.

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY

INTRODUCTORY

One of the most important sources of information for reconstructing the history of India and weaving the web of true and logical narration of facts is the study of inscriptions. India is rich in inscriptions and the considerable material already brought to light is indeed most valuable and interesting from different points of view. In spite, however, of the excellent efforts of the Epigraphical Department to save the inscriptions, there is a destructive agency of such tremendous proportions present all over that without a kindly understanding and interest in the mind of every individual in every village this tendency for destruction cannot be stopped. Every day and every hour the village-smith is probably in some corner of some village melting down a precious copper plate in the possession of some private family for utilizing the metal. The vandalism of misguided faith has demanded a heavy toll of most valuable inscriptions; an instance may be cited from Amaravati where after rubbing out all inscriptions and sculpture to satisfy Muslim conscience, the carved stūpa slabs were utilized in building construction. Similarly, a large number of inscribed stones, built up with face into the wall while transforming a Hindu structure into a mosque as in the university of Bhoja at Dhārā, require urgently to be rescued. In the Hindu temples themselves the tragedy of pious renovation has undone most of the labours of the mighty monarchs of old to hand over recorded history in inscriptions, as the process of renovation emphasizes for economy the utilization of the old material by rechiselling and renewing or, rather more correctly to put it, ruining the figures and obliterating inscriptions wherever they occur. In South India which abounds in temples and equally in pious renovators the problem is an urgent one. The last surviving inscribed pillar of a derelict *Sūryamaṇḍapa* from Kāñcīpuram recording the *Sūryaśataka* of Mayūra in Coḷa letters of the 10th century A.D. was broken and utilized by the ignorant temple trustees as building material; the small cost of purchasing an extra slab or two may have been saved but at tremendous cost to archæology.

The Public Works Department which has often used rich architectural, sculptural and epigraphical material for their work utilized the stones from the ramparts of the stately temple at Gangaikondacolapuram, Tanjore district, for constructing a dam across the Coleroon. The Kāveripākkam tank is studded with the most exquisite carvings from South India. Another vandalistic tendency is the use of gold and silver coins as buttons, studs and the like with the result that the legends are obliterated (*Ind. Ant.* XIV, p. 325).

The study of epigraphy, therefore, is a matter of vital importance. The inscriptions throw light on the life of sovereigns and the people over whom they ruled. Important incidents are recorded in them. Sometimes they supply or strengthen a weak link in accounts of dynasties known to us from other literary sources. They help us to locate the sites of ancient places by the geographical material recorded in them. They introduce us to institutions

prevailing in the country at the time of their record. They supply us with a complete list of the designation of officers of state to whom different functions were allocated. The prosperity of the country by sea-borne trade and privileges of merchant guilds are herein pictured. The religious faith, toleration or bigotry, endowments and charities for temples, monasteries, universities, etc., are recorded. Maintenance of charitable institutions, hospitals and colleges is herein mentioned.

The long and pompous descriptions of the royal families known as *Praśastis* or *Meykīrtis* give graphic accounts of various exploits. In the grants where the extent of land is specified with boundaries and other particulars, the names of villages and other geographical details help identification of the spot in terms of modern location. Modern Ahicchatra is mentioned as Ahicchatrābhukti in the Banskhera plate of Śrī Harṣavardhana. Sthānagundura is not a far cry from modern Tālgunda nor Elāpura from Ellora nor Kalyānapura from Kalyan. The exact location of Lumbini was possible only by the mention of the place in the Rummendai pillar inscription of Aśoka found in the place. In an inscription from Amaravati the word '*Kudūranivāsikāṣa*' points to a resident of ancient Kodūra which may be identified with modern Koddūru. Kondukūr and Bezwaḍa are mentioned in an Eastern Cālukyan-inscription in Telugu of the 9th century A.D. Modern Pithapur is known as Piṣṭapura in an early inscription.

The royal *Praśastis* and *Meykīrtis* are repeated at great length in the long stone-cut inscriptions running the whole length of the outer plinth and walls of the sanctum in some temples. One of the most classical instances of such inscriptions is the group on the walls of the Brhadiśvara temple at Tanjore that records the erection and installation of the famous deity Rājarājeśvaramuḍiār by the great emperor Rājarājacola. All the great gifts made by him, his sisters, queens, noblemen and generals are recorded; many minute details are mentioned regarding the infinite number, weight and value of jewels and beautiful metal images presented to the temple, some of the latter being among the finest of early Cola workmanship yet known. The variety of jewels of the period and their patterns and workmanship as we gather from these inscriptions, is amazing. A few names will serve as a sample—*tirumuḍi*—sacred lock, *porpū*—gold flower, *tiralmaṇivadam*—combinations of strings, *annam*—swan, *kīli*—parrot, *kaikārai*—bracelet, *aḍikārai*—anklet, *ṣaṇagachiduku*—lock formed in the fashion of *ṣonakas*, *vali* and *vaḍukavaḷi*—earring, *bhadram*—auspicious mark, *suṭṭi*—ornament for the forehead, *kondanan* or *kondattuḷar*—necklace, *kaṭakam*—bracelet, *modiram*—finger ring, *paṭṭigai*—girdle, *tiruppaṭṭam*—diadem, *maḷuṭom*—crown, *muttuvaḷaiyal* or *ratnavalaḷaiyal*—pearl bracelet or jewelled bracelet. These are just a few of a long list of ornaments. The inscriptions mention different varieties of pearls like *vaṭṭam* (round), *anuvattam* (slightly curved), *oppumuttu* (hollow pearls), *turumuttu* (small pearls), etc.

The inscriptions furnish a good deal of information regarding weights and measures; tables of measures can be made out by a study of the inscriptions where even the smallest measure is mentioned; similarly also regarding the weights used for gold, silver, copper and

other metals. Just as the measure, *drona*, was started by the Nandas '*Nandopakramam dronaḥ*', similarly some measures were started by Pallava and Cola kings. Sometimes they were named after the kings themselves like *Arumolidevan* after Rājārāja or *Vidēl-vidugu* after Pallava Mahendravarman or more often after the gods like *Dakṣiṇāmeruvidangan* and *Ālavallān*. From the inscriptions we get an insight into the price of articles to be compared with modern prices but it was mostly in terms of paddy, rice, pulse, ghee, oil, etc.

The brilliant paper on irrigation in ancient times by V. Venkayya (*Annual Report of the Director-General of Archaeology in India for 1903-4*) shows how valuable inscriptions are in enriching our knowledge about the facts of irrigation in ancient times. The inscription mentioning *Mahendrataṭāka* at Mahendravāḍi is among the most important Pallava documents. The *Vairāmegataṭāka*, *Parāmeśvarataṭāka* and *Chitrāmegataṭāka*, are other irrigation tanks of the Pallava period. The Tiruvallarai tank came into being during the reign of Dantivarman. The high bund built by Karikāla for the Kāverī, famous in literature, is mentioned in inscriptions as also other irrigation canals opened by Cola kings of the 10th-11th centuries like *Uyyakoṇḍān* and *Muḍikoṇḍān*. Pāṇḍyan inscriptions also mention such water channels.

The famous *Bhojasāgar* is a feat of engineering skill, and one of the largest irrigation tanks constructed in India. It really stirs our pride to read of how Bhoja, the great king, administrator, conqueror, poet, patron of poets, scholar in different branches like *Vyākaraṇa*, *Alaṃkāra*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Śilpa* and *Sthāpatya* was also an engineer and took special pride in this great irrigation lake on the waters of which his boat glided softly as he watched the scenery around.

An irrigation tank of huge dimensions which has existed in India from the earliest historical times having been repaired during the Mauryan period twice and again during the time of the Kṣatrapa king Rudradāman is mentioned yet once more during the time of the Guptas in the Junāgaḍh inscription of Skandagupta. The lake *Sudarśana* was again carefully rebuilt with masonry work making the embankment really strong (*Fleet C. Inscr. Ind.-III*, p. 61); but the most picturesque description in epigraphy describing the overflow from the huge water reservoir is recorded in the inscription of Mahāksatrapa Rudradāman where the same *Sudarśana* lake forms the object of description.

If the discovery of tribal coins of the Yaudheyas, Arjunāyanas, Audumbaras, Mālavas, Pañcālas, Vatāsvakas, etc., has helped the historian to understand literary sources better and reconstruct the history of democratic institutions in ancient India, inscriptions have helped him a thousandfold. Just as the discovery of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* revolutionized the view-point of the historian of India regarding her political institutions so also the publication and interpretation of the Uttaramallūr inscriptions describing village institutions in the 10th century A.D., have removed all doubts regarding the innate spirit of self-governing democratic

bodies in South India from very early times. The various qualifications required of a candidate standing for membership in the village assembly are given, the minimum property, age limit, character and equipment. Disqualifications are also mentioned. The method of election is most interesting. The village was divided into a number of wards or centres where pots were kept with their mouths covered, leaving a slot for the voting card, a small palm-leaf ticket with the name of the person noted to be dropped in. On the day of election, all the people of the village gathered together, the contents of each pot made into a bundle and all emptied into an empty pot and well shaken. A boy who knew nothing about all this was to take a card at random from the pot and the name was read out. This was done in the presence of arbitrators, near the village temple. One man was chosen for each ward. After this general election, several committees were formed for looking after gardens, tanks, fields, gold, the wards, administration of justice, etc.

The system of punishment and administration of justice in the case of criminal offence can be learnt from inscriptions. An example may not be out of place. A man hunting at night missed his aim at the boar and shot a human being. He was ordered to give thirty-two cows for a lamp to be kept burning in the temple for the merit of the deceased.

The inscriptions also give glimpses regarding the social conditions of the time. In a Vijayanagara inscription we are told that the emperor settled the disputes between a Vaiṣṇava *Jeer* and a Jain teacher by making them agree to be friends and raise no points of dispute. In another Vijayanagara inscription there is a graphic account of how the learned scholars in all branches of sacred studies assembled and signed a document which forbade *Kanyāśulka* and *Varadakṣiṇā* in any marriage arrangement and threatened punishment by the king and social exclusion from the community for parties receiving either (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 84). Special privileges like the bride and bridegroom riding a horse in procession being allowed by royal command (*Epigraph Ind.* VI, p. 346) is also gathered from inscriptions.

The temple was one of the greatest institutions created by the Indian genius. It was the hub on which revolved the whole life of the village. The temple provided for the education of the scholar, the amusement of the public, the cultivation of art and aesthetic sense and for the piety of the worshippers. The temple, as can be gathered from the inscriptions, was at once a great centre of various activities. The great endowments made to temples were not in vain. The sense of responsibility of the committees that managed the temples was very great and it should be remembered that high character and scholarship were essential for those who were to serve on these committees. The temples provided for the conducting of classes in various sciences and systems of philosophy, grammar, rhetoric and religious hymns. In inscriptions from Enṇāyiram we have a long list of the various courses of study, the number of teachers, and students for whose maintenance provision was made. An excellent scheme of both juvenile and adult education on the noblest lines for imparting right ideas of social life and conduct, right morals, incorruptible ways, sound

general knowledge of the affairs of the world, of institutions political and social, and of economics from a broad view-point, was all arranged by the king through the exposition of special parts of the *Mahābhārata*, the encyclopædic national epic, which has shaped Indian thought and character through the ages.

Hospitals were maintained by the temples. A Kākatiya inscription from Mālkāpuram mentions a maternity hospital. Another inscription in Tamil gives a long list of medicines stocked and the quantity of each. In times of famine the temples, being rich institutions dedicated to the service of humanity, undertook the feeding of people on a large scale.

Provision was made in the temples for morning and evening music, the pipers, drummers, flutists and others being given separate land allowances. An inscription mentions the arrangement for the play of the *Vīṇā* in the temple. Having myself witnessed in a large but neglected, out of the way temple in my district the dance and *abhinaya* performed before the deity, the song being sung and commented in the language of gesture according to the canons of Bharata, I can say that it is no exaggeration that either Rājarāja or Rājendra was thrilled when he witnessed a great *nāṭya* performance in one of the temples; but the inscription does mention in glowing terms the king's high appreciation of this art and his reward therefor. The *Nāṭya-maṇḍapa* in the temple was explicitly for this purpose. However prude social reformers may be on the question of the *nautch*, it was a necessary institution in the temple. Similarly, drama was fostered, and the *Ranga-maṇḍapa* in the temple served as the open-air theatre, and we learn from inscriptions of the drama, *Rāja-rājesvara Nāṭaka*, enacted during the time of Rājendra Coḷa I in such a theatre.

Provision was made for the chant of *Devāram* in Śaivite temples and the hymns of the Ālvārs in Viṣṇu temples. Similarly arrangements were made for the chant of the *Vedas*, *Rg*, *Yajus* and *Sāma*. The temple provided occupation for wood-carvers, sculptors, painters, gardeners, garland-makers, potters, watermen, cooks and accountants, among others. The festivals conducted at periodic intervals attracted crowds from distant places and large fairs contributed to that healthy social intercourse which is a unifying bond between villages and districts. We learn from inscriptions that the kings also supported educational institutions (*ghaṭikas*), outside the temple precincts, solely dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge in the different branches of studies. These *ghaṭikas* were looked upon with great respect and the one at Kāñcī took an important lead in the election of the prince Nandivarman Pallavamalla to the Pallava throne as is gathered from the inscription in the Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl temple. It is from inscriptions that we learn of the friendly interest that the kings took in the various religions other than their own. The *Cūḷāmaṇivihāra* at Negapatam was an instance of a Buddhist institution fostered by the Colas. The sister of Rājarāja, the queen Kundavai, was responsible for a Jaina temple at Tirumalai. This is not an isolated instance. King Devarāja similarly built a Jaina temple. We have the

classical instance of Aśoka giving his opinion in the matter. It is from his edicts we learn that it is the most foolish thing for one interested in his own faith to persecute the faiths of others and Aśoka has expressly preached tolerance, nay, requested active support for faiths other than one's own.

Sometimes there may be a stone in a village with quaint figures of an archer and cows ; of a man fighting a tiger ; or of a warrior on elephant or horseback fighting a rival. These stones may sometimes contain inscriptions describing a hero who died fighting in a *Gograhaṇa* (cattle-raid), a man who killed a tiger which was harassing villagers, a devotee fulfilling his vow by offering his head ; or of a warrior killed in battle being gloriously transported to heaven. Sometimes the slab represents the upraised female hand with bracelets and the inscription would mention the act of *Satī* committed by the woman on the funeral pyre of her husband. We have classical mediæval examples of *Satī* in the noble queen Yaśomati of Prabhākaravardhana and in Vānavanmahādevī, the wife of Sundaracola ; both of them were great queens, mothers respectively of the great emperors, Harsa and Rājārāja. And an inscription from the temple of Rājārāja at Tanjore mentions the image set up by princess Kundavai for her mother, Vānavanmahādevī.

From the inscriptions, again, we gather an amount of information about land divisions, assessment, survey and settlement. The taxes payable to the state, and the conditions of land ownership are given. The proportion of the produce to be enjoyed by the cultivator and the state is specifically mentioned.

So far as territorial divisions are concerned large areas corresponding to our modern Presidencies are known as *deśa*. In North Indian inscriptions the *deśa* was divided into *bhuktis*, *bhuktis* subdivided into *viśayas*. In South India in the Tamil area *valanāḍu*, *nāḍu*, *koṭṭam*, *ūr* were the territorial divisions. Large units were known by the name of *maṇḍalam*, *pāḍi*, or *vāḍi* in the Tamil and Canarese areas. We have such names as Colamaṇḍalam, Toṇḍamaṇḍalam, Gangavāḍi, Raṭṭappāḍi, Perumbāṇappāḍi, Nulambapāḍi. Sometimes there are territorial divisions based on the name of the adjoining hills as, for instance, Ballamkoṇḍa, Tirumalai, Venkuṇḍram, etc. Such territorial divisions as Vaḍahala-vaḷināḍu and Vaḍavaḷināḍu show that their boundaries were high roads known by those names. Similarly, the banks of rivers also formed boundaries. In the Cola period many of the *Valanāḍus* were named after the king as Arumolivalanāḍu, or after some branch of art or culture, like Nityavinodavalanāḍu.

Of the officers under the king the inscriptions give a lengthy list. At the royal court were the *Sacivas*, *Amātyas*, *Pradhānāmātyas* ; the important ministers, *Mahādaṇḍa-nāyakas*, *Mahābalādhikṛta*, *Mahāsenāpati* or commanders and generals ; and under them in charge of cavalry and elephantry corps were *Aśvapatis* and *Pilupatis*. *Bhuktis* were under *Uparikas*, and *Viśayas* under *Viśayapatis* or *Viśayamahattaras*. Other subordinate revenue officers like *Āyuktas*, *Vyāpṛtas*, *Adhikṛtas* are also known. *Cāṭas* and *Bhaṭas* were akin

to police officials. Among judicial officers are the *Nayādhikaraṇas* and the *Dharmādhikaraṇas*. All these designations occur mostly in North Indian records. In the Hirahaḍagalli plates of Pallava Śivaskandavarman, *Amātyas* are mentioned but in later Pallava inscriptions, *Mātras* are mentioned. They correspond to the Mauryan *Mahāmātras*. In the Prakrit charters of the Pallavas the names of a number of officers are given like *Vallava*, *Govallava*, *Rahasyādhikṛta*. It is believed that *Vāyilkeḷpār* mentioned in the Kaśākuḍi plates were secretaries and the *Kośādhyaḥṣa* is the officer in charge of the treasury. The *adhikaraṇadaṇḍa* mentioned in the Kaśākuḍi plates should mean the fine imposed by the law courts. Among the officers in close attendance on the king are the *Tirumandiravolai*, and *Tiruvāikeḷvi* who took down the orders of the king and carefully listened to his utterances.

The inscriptions give us an insight into the extent of Indian influence, cultural, maritime and military in such distant islands as Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Malaya, Annam, Burma, Ceylon, Laccadives, Maldives and other islands in the Indian Ocean. The various places mentioned in the inscriptions of Rājarāja and Rājendra in many cases still remain a puzzle, though the efforts of scholars have helped us greatly in understanding the naval conquests of these mighty kings beyond the seas. Rājendra's overseas campaign is graphically described in the Tamil *praśasti*: “(Who) having despatched many ships in the midst of the rolling sea and having caught Sangrāma-vijayottungavarman, the king of Kadāram, together with the elephants in his glorious army (took) the large heap of treasures, which (that king) had rightfully accumulated; (captured) with noise the (arch called) *Vidyādhara-toraṇa* at the ‘war-gate’ of his extensive city; Śrī Vijaya with the ‘jewelled wicket-gate’ adorned with great splendour and the ‘gate of large jewels’; Pannai with water in its bathing ghats; the ancient Malaiyūr with the strong mountain for its rampart; Māyirūḍiṅgam surrounded by the deep sea (as) by a moat; Ilangāśōka (*i.e.*, Lankāśōka) undaunted (in) fierce battles; Māpappālam having abundant (deep) water as defence; Mevilimbangam, having fine walls as defence; Valaippandūru having vilappandūru(?) Talaitakkolam praised by great men (versed in) in the sciences; Mādamālingam, firm in great and fierce battles; Ilāmuridēśam, whose fierce strength rose in war; Mānakkavāram, in whose extensive flower gardens honey was collecting; and Kadāram, of fierce strength which was protected by the deep sea.” (*S. Ind. Inscr.* II, p. 109). Though the task of identification of the places mentioned in Rājendra's inscriptions was undertaken quite a long time ago by Hultzsch, even in the time of Venkayya the identification progressed only to the extent of correctly understanding Nakkavaram as Nicobar Islands and Pappālam as a port in Burma. The efforts of Coedes to understand the various places have given the most intelligible account of Rājendra's campaign; and place names like Māyirūḍiṅgam, Ilangāśōkam, Talaitakkolam, Mādamālingam, Ilāmuridēśam, etc., should be located in the Malayan Peninsula and Sumatra. From the inscriptions we learn that Sangrāma Vijayottungavarman of the Śailendra dynasty of Śrīvijaya acknowledged the suzerainty of the Cola

emperor. The larger Leyden grant refers to the construction of the Cūḍāmaṇivihāra at Negapatam by Māra Vijayottungavarman and shows the relationship between India, Sumatra and Java.

From inscriptions we learn of the prosperity of the land through trade with other countries. During the time of the mighty emperor Rājendracōla, who converted the Bay of Bengal into a 'Coła lake,' trade flourished and we find inscriptions of merchants from his realm in distant islands like Sumatra (*An. Rep. S. Ind. Epigraph*, 92, 11). The tax levied on merchandise according to the unit of ship in terms of Gadyāṇa coins is mentioned in a Rāṭrakūṭa inscription (*Epigraph Ind. III*, p. 301). Similar tax known as *Kūpaśulka* was levied on commodities taken overseas and this we learn from a Kākatīya inscription (*An. Rep. S. Ind. Epigraph*, 10, 45).

We know from literature that from the earliest times there used to be very active maritime intercourse between India and various other countries. The Baveru jātaka is an instance. Important ports were at Bharukaccha, Śorpāraga, Kāveripūmpaṭṭanam, etc. In early Śāṅgam literature the last mentioned figures prominently. The Ālvārs mention the sea-port of Mahābalipuram as Kadalmallai. Masulipatam was a great sea-port about the beginning of the Christian era. Here again the inscriptions render invaluable service in introducing to us various places to which our ancient sailors resorted both with merchandise and colonists.

The sixth century Sanskrit inscription of Rudravarman from Fu-nan Kamboja and four of Pūrṇavarman from West Java show that Hindu kingdoms were established in these distant lands. Similarly the Hindu kingdom of Śrīvijaya was founded in Sumatra. The Sanskrit *Yūpa* inscriptions of about the 5th century A.D., mentioning the sacrifices performed by Mūlavarman graphically describing the large quantity of gold expended by the king in the performance of the great sacrifice known as *Bahusvarṇa* giving away twenty thousand cows as *dakṣiṇā* at Vaprakeśvara show the deep-rooted nature of Hindu thought and culture in the Island. In the words of Majumdar "the inscriptions discovered at Borneo, Java, Annam, Cambodia and Malay Peninsula lead inevitably to the conclusion that the language, literature, religion and political and social institutions in India made a thorough conquest of these far-off lands, and, to a great extent, eliminated or absorbed the native elements in these respects." Chhabra's illuminating paper on the cultural expansion in South India during the Pallava rule gives a vivid picture of this aspect.

The religion, whether Brahmanical or Buddhist, in these islands came from India and the whole pantheon is found transplanted on their soil. Some of the most lovely specimens of the different *mūrtis* have Indian influences. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is represented in exquisite sculptures at Prambanam and the story of Buddha at Borobodur. The fine Prajñāpāramitā image comes from Java and is now preserved in the Leyden Museum. Sanskrit language and literature being highly cultivated, the language of the inscriptions is flawless Sanskrit. The script used for the inscriptions is also borrowed from India.

The inscriptions reveal to us the personality of our greatest rulers. The Nāsik inscription of Balasiri, the plaintive cry of a sorrowing mother recounting the noble qualities of a worthy son and sovereign, presents an excellent picture of the personality of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi, the great Śātavāhana ruler. His face resembled the full moon. His long and shapely arm resembled the stately form of the lord of serpents. He had the charm of the lotus flower fully opened by the rays of the sun. He allayed the fears of anyone who sought his protection. His orders were obeyed by all kings with great respect. He was the very pink of courtesy and most devoted to his mother. He shared the pleasures of his subjects and sympathised with them in their woes. He always spared the life of even the most troublesome enemy as he could not bear unnecessary shedding of blood. He promoted the families of the twice-born and the lowly. He established by practice and precept righteous conduct. In this inscription he is described as 'the only bow-man,' '*Ekadhanudhara*' and on his coin this epithet has been symbolised by a strung bow shown on the obverse.

The Allahabad pillar inscription describes Samudragupta as a great ruler, a great general, a great scholar and a great musician. The graphic description of his musical talents in the inscription is actually given realistic shape on the obverse of his lyrist-type of coins where the king is shown seated on couch, playing the *Vīṇā* resting on his lap.

The personality of Māh-ksatrpa Rudradāman is again clearly revealed in the Junāgaḍh inscription. His birth in the lap of fortune and power, his comely appearance, his exceptional capacity in battle, his special training in statecraft, his knowledge of the different sciences and arts including grammar, music and logic, the fabulous wealth in his treasury overflowing with gold, silver, diamonds and gems but all the wealth rightfully obtained, present him as an exceptionally fortunate and brilliant prince. No wonder that as the inscriptions mention he was wreathed with many garlands at different *svayamvaras* by the daughters of many kings. His personal beauty and even the sweetness of his voice and the lovely nature of his gait are specifically mentioned in the inscription.

The personality of Aśoka is revealed in his inscriptions. Their language is simple and the picture presented is quite clear. We have here the greatest of Indian emperors speaking to his subjects as to his children. How often has he not repeated that this should be done and not something else? The broad sympathies, clear-cut views, tolerant vision, and quaint simplicity, of a powerful emperor are at once evident in his edicts. His feeling heart is revealed in his sorrow over the huge killing and bloodshed in the Kalinga war. His utter disregard for personal comfort and the one desire to be of the utmost help to his subjects—his subjects he regarded as his own children and he was in the true sense a Rājā by *Prakṛtirañjana*, his subjects being his *Prajā* in the literal sense—is evident from one of his edicts where he mentions that there is no fixed time for interviewing him but any affair of state could be brought to him for disposal whether he was in the dining chamber or in the harem or in the cowshed or in the palanquin or in the pleasure garden. We are reminded

how similarly Rājendra, the Coḷa emperor, also heard cases and issued orders to his officers even when he was in the dining hall. Aśoka's child-like simplicity is revealed in his plain statement of facts about ration in his kitchen. The slaughter of animals and fowl which was originally done on a large scale was reduced to that of a single deer as he had almost tabooed venison; peacock killing was reduced to the minimum, only two being allowed at the time the edict was incised; and the emperor declared his wish that he would give up even this. We can imagine what a sacrifice this is on the part of the king if we read the *Suṇḍarakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* where the different viands and liquors are graphically described in Rāvaṇa's kitchen almost causing the mouth of those accustomed to these to water; and how praiseworthy for one accustomed to luxuries to voluntarily lead the simple life of almost an anchorite. Aśoka's inscriptions refer to certain administrative innovations carried out by the emperor to improve the prevailing state of affairs. *Dharmamahāmātras* who did not exist before were appointed by Aśoka for the propagation of piety. Never in the past have officers called *Mahāmātras* of morality (*Dhammamahamata*) existed, but now Aśoka created them since it was his intense desire to see that virtue was practised. Though the emperor knew of the various traditional auspicious ceremonies performed during marriage, child-birth, etc., he regarded most of them as useless and favoured only such ceremonies as would bear good fruit, like courtesy to slaves, reverence to elders, gentleness to animals and liberality to Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas. Aśoka deploras that people are prone to recount only their virtuous deeds, but not their evil performances. So he puts forth a strong plea for avoiding sin and practising merit. In the past kings went on pleasure tours, but Aśoka went only on tours of morality. His deep concern for the welfare of man and beast is evident in the arrangements made by him to plant banyan trees and mango groves to afford shade, to dig wells at intervals with flights of steps for drinking water, and to build numerous rest-houses and hospitals both for men and animals. The inscriptions of Aśoka describe the emperor's missionary activity and efforts to propagate ideas of *dharma* and social service not only within India but far outside its borders, in the kingdoms of Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt, Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia, Magas of Syriani and Alexandar of either Epirus or Corinth (Tulamaya, Antekina, Maka and Alikasudara) even at the risk of being ridiculed as a mad idealist. In the inscription of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi it has been stated that the emperor identified himself with his subjects in their sorrows and joys; Skandagupta is described in the Junāgaḍh inscription as making his people happy by sweet talk prefaced by smiles, courtesy, honour and liberality. In one of his inscriptions Aśoka expresses himself as the father of his subjects, in whose welfare and happiness he is interested as in that of his own children, and that not only in this world but also in the other. But he was not satisfied with the happiness of his own subjects; he extends his desire for this happiness beyond his dominions and expresses his anxiety for the increased joy of people beyond his dominions whom also he considers as his own children. It is for this purpose that he made arrangements for transcribing his edicts even beyond his domain and arranged that his

Mahāmātras may strive to inspire confidence and induce the borderers to practise meritorious deeds.

A great contemporary of the Śunga, Puṣyamitra, and Śātakarṇi, the powerful Sātavāhana sovereign, was Khāravela, the greatest king of Kalinga. A complete picture of this great ruler is presented in the Hathigumpha inscription where all his exploits year after year are stated with precision. His own personal talents and learning in various sciences and arts are also mentioned. From this inscription we gather how he repaired the gates and ramparts of his city, erected embankments to several tanks including the lake *Khivira*, at a very great cost, built a royal residence called the *Mahāvijayaprāsāda* or the palace of great victory with the riches brought from Anga and Magadha. He built excellent towers with their interiors decorated with sculpture and painting. The amenities provided by him in his realm are also mentioned. He caused festivities and *samāja* assemblies to be held to entertain his people with dance, drama and music, vocal and instrumental. He constructed rest houses remitted many taxes, bestowed several privileges on the corporations both urban and rural (*Paura* and *Ĵānapada*). He celebrated the famous *Rājasūya* sacrifice by establishing his might with his army. His religious bent of mind is revealed in all that he did for the Jaina religion on the Kumari hill in the nature of amenities and offerings for the ascetics and sages following the *dharma* of *Arhat*. Withal he was a tolerant monarch as is evident from his attitude to the Brāhmaṇas. He was a great King of Peace, King of Prosperity, King of Monks, and King of Religion who had seen, heard and realised blessings (*kalyāṇa*).

The mighty ruler Rājarāja and his son Rājendra did not have the good fortune to be visited by foreign travellers to leave grand accounts of the noble, awe-inspiring, royal courts, palaces and temples as in the time of Kṛṣṇadevarāya. All that we know of the Cola emperors is mainly from their inscriptions, which, however, give ample material for the understanding of their personality. History has no greater instance of a pious queen than the saintly Sembian-mā-devī, the consort of Gaṇḍarāditya who was widowed at a tender age with a babe in her arms; and many indeed are the temples in the Coḷa realm that have been endowed by this queen whose every wish Rājarāja, her grand-nephew, respected. The Tiruvālangāḍu inscription specially mentions that though the people chose the heir-apparent Rājarāja to be their king he would not consider the throne when his uncle Uttamacoḷa had not enjoyed it. Rājarāja's might, conquests, administrative machinery, fabulous wealth, unparalleled liberality, in short, all the pomp and splendour of the great Coḷa empire in the building of which he had such an important hand before his son extended it further, is all revealed in minute detail in the long inscriptions from the Brhadiśvara temple at Tanjore. The campaigns of Rājendra Coḷa described at such length and with such a wealth of detail in his *praśastis* are fittingly celebrated by the erection of a novel *jayastambha*, in this case a *jalastambha* of the most sacred water on earth. He emulated Bhagīratha and in fact the tribute he levied from those whom he overcame in the region of the Ganges was only the water of the holy

river to be carried to his realm to be emptied in the mighty tank near the huge temple of Śiva at a new capital for his empire that he constructed and named Gangakoṇḍaḥapuram to commemorate the great event. The conquest of Rājendra mentioned in his inscriptions and its consequences are confirmed by a Gāhaḍavāla inscription at Gangakoṇḍaḥapuram wherein the usual preamble of the Coḷa inscriptions precedes its own indicating in unequivocal manner the suzerainty of the Coḷa emperor years later. The Dvārapālaka from Kalyāṇapura in the Dārāsura temple and the few Kalinga and Pāla images found scattered in these Coḷa temples are additional evidences of Coḷa military triumph but it is the inscriptions that give a clearer written record of victory.

Sometimes it is not merely the personality of the ruler that is revealed in the inscriptions but occasional light is thrown on the exigencies of social life as in the case of a Brahmana who turns into a warrior. A remarkable statement with a wealth of detail is in the Tālagunda inscription of Kākusthavarman where the progenitor of the Kadamba family Mayūraśarma is described as a student come to Kāñci for his Vedic studies who on being insulted by the soldiers in the cavalry of the Pallava king, could not brook it and, in the words of the inscription, with the hand that was accustomed to hold the *kuśa* grass, fuel, stones ladle, melted butter and the oblation vessel, he grasped a flaming sword to conquer the earth; and so continues the inscription to narrate how the successors of Mayūraśarma went from strength to strength and the family where the hair was wet with the holy water of the purificatory rites of different sacrifices, deeply learned in the sacred lore, that kindled the fire and drank the Soma, in the interior of whose houses loudly resounded the chants of the *Veda* and the *Vedāṅga*, and that tended a Kadamba tree with blooming flowers near their dwelling, turned into a house of Kṣatriya kings and one of the daughters of the family married into the imperial house of the Guptas.

The Maṇḍagapaṭu inscription is another epigraphical curio. This is a joyous exclamation of a king taking delight in inventing something novel, different from existing things. Hitherto constructions generally were of brick, timber, lime and metal but now this curious-minded king—the king actually describes himself so—excavated cave temples with fine carved panels out of the living rock. This is the origin of the numerous early Pallava temples in the Tamil area about the beginning of the 7th century A.D.

Life is short and uncertain, wealth is fleeting in nature; and the ruler of today is the beggar of the morrow. It is not always that the surface of the stream of life is unruffled. Great men have adversities. In the Bhitari pillar inscription of Skandagupta there is a statement of great significance. The inscription says that in preparing himself to restore the fallen fortunes of his family a whole night was spent by the emperor on no other couch except the bare earth.

Sometimes there is a dramatic effect in the narration in an inscription. In the same Bhitari inscription it is stated that with the cry 'Victory has been achieved' Kumāragupta rushed to his mother whose eyes were wet with tears of joy, like Kṛṣṇa going to his mother

Dēvakī after slaying his enemies. The glorious king Īśānavarman wedded to heroism and truth though fully favoured by fortune resorted to Prayāga and there, decorated with flowers, entered a fire kindled with dry cow-dung cakes as if it were water for a bath and put an end to his life. This is in accordance with the belief that voluntary death at Prayāga assures heaven as Kālidāsa says *Tanutyajām nāsti śarirabandhah*. Another instance like this, known through epigraphy is the death of Cālukya Āhavamalla Someśvara II, the father of Vikramaditya VI who being the victim of a malignant fever put an end to his life in the *Sangama* of Tungabhadra followed by his devoted queens and against the wishes of his loving, tear-stained subjects who followed him to prevent the mishap.

We may have heard of fabulous stories of extraordinary wealth and gifts and charities beyond all conceivable limits of liberality. A story narrates how Anāthapiṇḍita spread the whole surface of Jetavana garden with gold coins, purchased it at that price, and presented it with a newly built monastery to the Enlightened One. It is in the Nānāghat inscription of Śātakarṇi and the inscription of Usavadāta at Nāsik that we get a staggering account of the generous impulses in a man. Possession of wealth is one thing and natural liberality another. The Nandas were fabulously rich but we do not know of any gifts made by them. Śātakarṇi in performing the *Aśvamedha* twice, *Gavāmayana*, *Agnyādheya*, *Rājasūya*, *Aptoryāma* and other sacrifices, gave liberal *dakṣiṇā* or sacrificial fee consisting of villages, *kārṣāpaṇas*, cows, elephants, horses, horse-chariots, silver pots, dresses and so on. Khīravela, his contemporary, was equally munificent. He even made the gift of the golden *Kalpataru*. But these are specific sacrificial gifts. The long catalogue of meritorious deeds of Usavadāta is more interesting. He was the donor of three hundred thousand cows, performer of sacred gifts of gold on the river Bārnāsa, giver of sixteen villages to the gods and Brāhmaṇas, host, all the year round, of a hundred thousand Brāhmaṇas, giver of eight wives to Brāhmaṇas in the sacred place Prabhāsa, donor of quadrangular hermitages, dwellings and shelter houses at Bhārugacha, Daśapura, Govardhana and Śorparāga, maker of pleasure-grounds, tanks and wells, founder of free ferries by boats on the Ibā, Pāradī, Damanā, Tāpī, Karabeṇā and Dahanukā.

If occasionally we have here and there a portrait sculpture of some great ruler, it is also sometimes accompanied by his consort or consorts. The Pallava royal portrait sculptures are famous. In the lovely painting fragment of Mahendravarman at Sittannavāsāl there is the lovely face of his queen beside him. Even here epigraphy supplies its own quota to the pictures that we have of great kings and queens. We have considered kings. A single instance of a queen would suffice. The favourite queen of Rājasimha, the Pallava king, who constructed the Kailāsanātha temple, was Rangapatākā who, according to the inscription in that temple, was a *patākā* (banner) as it were among women. She is described further as 'full of loveliness, sharpness, grace and cleanliness, who seemed to be the master-piece of the Creator, whose skill had at last attained perfection after He had created thousands of good-looking women, she who was charming through genuine sweetness, who was adorned with grace, coquetry and feeling . . . etc.'

The infinite value of epigraphy in the understanding of the ancient arts like dance and music is amply illustrated in the musical inscriptions of the Pallavas and the labelled dance poses from the *gopura* of the temple at Chidambaram. The Kuṭimiyāmalai musical inscription and a similar one from Tirumaiyam are extremely valuable as they record the musical notes as understood and practised during the time of the Pallavas. Similarly the use of the term *Parivādinī* in the inscription shows that the early type of *vīṇā* was still in use in the seventh century. And this is confirmed by a sculpture from the Dacca Museum where Sarasvatī, the consort of Viṣṇu, represented on Garuḍa carries the lyre type of *vīṇā*. The labelled sculptured panels representing the different *sthānas* and *karaṇas* given in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* are the most elaborate commentary and most intelligible, probably more so than even the learned explanation of the texts by Abhinavagupta. This visual explanation is aided by the presence of the labels which are short inscriptions describing the *sthānas* (dance poses). And about these representations being the most correct there can be no two opinions as the Coḷa period undoubtedly was the time when the glory of dance was at its zenith, the emperors being great patrons of this art as gathered from the inscriptions.

The presence of inscriptions along with sculpture either to explain the carving or to mention a gift and the name of the donor is the most valuable clue to understanding its date, the circumstances under which it came into being, and the theme of the carving itself. It is the presence of the inscriptions, labels explaining the panels and carvings at Bharhut, that has helped a correct understanding of this important monument. Without the label how could we know whether the image was intended to represent Sirimā or Culakokā or Sudarsana? It is the presence of a single line of inscription in an early sculpture from Amaravati that has proved beyond doubt that Yakṣa worship prevailed in the Krishna valley and was a feature as much of South India as of the North. Images dated on stylistic grounds independently can have their dates verified and checked with the help of such images as bear inscriptions on their pedestals, with dates, if any. But even if the dates were absent, the palaeography of the inscription would itself help considerably in the proper dating of the figure. Sometimes even though identification of panels containing stories from the Jātakas and Avadānas is not impossible the inscriptions below vouch for the correctness of the identification. Sometimes it so happens that there is not sufficient literary material to throw light on the sculptured theme, in which case the label becomes absolutely valuable. If the Pallava inscriptions give long lists of the royal house the sculptures of the Vaikuṇṭhanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram present a more graphic picture of the rise and growth of the dynasty. Here again it is the presence of a few inscribed labels that has helped the scholars to proceed and progress along the correct path of identification with the clue obtained therefrom.

Again, without the help of inscriptions we cannot understand who executed the carvings how, and at whose instance. Mostly it is the name of the donor that is given. If the carving is a religious gift it is so stated. Occasionally the name of the sculptor is also given. This is not only in the case of a sculpture as such but also in the case of any part of a structure for

which the donor is responsible. Such donative inscriptions abound in the early stūpas where a cross-bar or two, an upright or coping piece from a rail, a casing slab or a *dharmacakra* or a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* is presented by a perfumer or a cobbler or a musician or a trader or a leader of a caravan of merchants, a lay sister or a monk or a house-holder with brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, daughters-in-law and other relations and friends. Sometimes we hear that a guild of workmen completed a particular part of a building as, for instance, is given in an inscription at Sānci that one of the *torāṇa* gateways was carved by the ivory carvers of Vidiśā and the fine workmanship is an enlarged version of the usual delicate work of the ivory-carvers. From these inscriptions we gather information also about the different places from which such pious pilgrims came; e.g., at Amaravati we hear of people coming from distant places like Pāṭaliputra, Rājagiri and Simhagiri. The occurrence of the carved moon-stones near the gateway entrances of the stūpas and monasteries at Nāgārjunakonda which points to Ceylonese influence is amply testified by the inscriptions found in the place.

However graphic may be the description of a battle—and we have one of the most picturesque descriptions of a battle in the Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman—historians are bound to view with suspicion any account of large-scale conquest. But the prominent presence of an inscription in the vanquished ruler's city to announce the shame of defeat of the king is evidence not to be lightly brushed aside. The presence of the inscription of the victorious Western Cālukyan Vikramāditya in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram, the capital of the Pallavas, and similarly of Narasimhavarman proclaiming his victory prominently at Bādāmi itself, the capital of the early Western Cālukyas, is a more important and more emphatic assertion of the conquest of both than in any of their other inscriptions, however forcefully put. On such occasions the scribes and stone-cutters follow their royal patrons and inscriptions are incised to commemorate their victories or donations in a language and script totally different from those of the area concerned. Rājendra's victorious *praśastis* in Kalinga or in the Cālukyan area, Narasimhavarman's inscription in Grantha at Vātāpi are instances. Similarly the occurrence of Tamil inscriptions in distant islands like Sumatra where the language is totally unknown, and the presence of the Gāhaḍavāla inscription at Gangakondaḥapūram have all their own story to tell.

Numismatics is no doubt an important source in understanding the true history of the land, but the coins themselves to be understood require the help of epigraphy. This dependence on epigraphy is not in any small measure when we remember that sometimes the legends on coins are sufficiently lengthy. It is only by a study of the different scripts that one can unravel the mysteries of coin legends which are as numerous and varied as the scripts themselves. Sometimes it is only the coins that reveal the use of a particular script in an area in a subsidiary fashion alongside of a main script used for inscriptions. As example may be cited the Coḷa coins of Uttama, Rājarāja and Rājendra and a Kerala coin of Śrī Virakerala wherein Nagari is used for the legends, though we know of no inscription in Nagari issued by these kings, the script used being invariably Grantha, Tamil or Vaṭṭeluttu.

So far we have considered the need for studying inscriptions and what the inscriptions reveal to us. There is probably no field of knowledge that does not come within the scope of inscriptions as, after all, inscriptions are only permanent documents recording the life and happenings of their time with special reference to the king and his relationship with his people.

But to study and understand these inscriptions which differ from area to area and age to age in the type of script and language used, knowledge of palaeography is essential. Palaeography being the subject dealing with scripts, a study of this reveals how scripts came into being, developed and changed during the centuries. In the subject of epigraphy palaeography comes in as the most important limb. The age of the inscriptions, the growth of language, the literary beauty of the language—all these come only next in importance. In the following pages the essential features of Indian epigraphy with special reference to South India and her scripts have been discussed.

DOCUMENT.

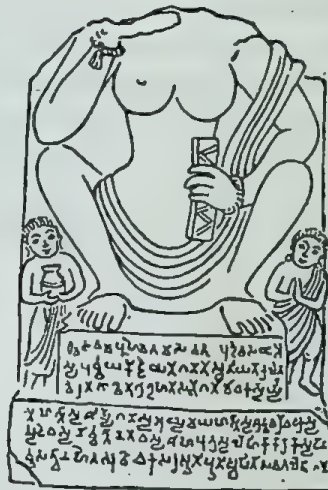
A document is engraved on a tablet or a metal plate which is usually shaped after a simpler original—a leaf or bark. In sculptures we find figures carrying these documents of bark or leaf in their hands. This is the usual thing in the case of all divinities presiding over learning and great masters profound in their knowledge of the essentials of wisdom. Brahma, the Lord of Learning is always represented in sculpture with a book in his left hand. A good early example of this may be seen in the representation of the deity at Aihole and Badami to which Bühler (*Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 1) has drawn attention; a still better example is the Gupta-Maitraka sculpture from the Ardhanārīśvara panel at the Elephanta cave, near Bombay (Fig. 1). His spouse Sarasvatī carries a book similarly as she presides over



C S. del.

FIG. 1

learning, more particularly over the secular and artistic side than her four-faced lord whose very breath is of the essence of the four *Vedas* which are chanted by an equal number of mouths. The earliest example of Sarasvatī yet found in India is a headless image of the deity from Mathura with an inscription on pedestal of about the beginning of the Christian era. In her left hand she holds a book composed of palm-leaves or cut birch bark tied together with string (Fig. 2). Śiva as a teacher of the universe, the teacher *par excellence* whose disciples



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FIG. 2

are sages ripe in years and wisdom, holds a book in the same manner. One of the early examples of Vishnu in this form is in a panel from the Gupta temple at Deogarh (Fig. 3).



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FIG. 3

His right hand is in the *vyākhyānamudrā* or in the attitude of elucidation. These two hands and their attitude are noteworthy as the *vyākhyānamudrā* occurs also in the case of the greatest of Indian masters, the Buddha. The *dharmacakrapravartana*, the setting in motion of the wheel of dharma or the first sermon on dharma of Buddha is suggested by the *mudrā* of his hands styled *dharmacakrapravartanamudrā*. In most representations, one end of his cloak is caught by Buddha in his left hand while the other is raised. The end of the cloak resembles a small book and this is very suggestive (Fig. 4). Mānikkavācaka, the great scholar devotee of Śiva from



FIG. 4

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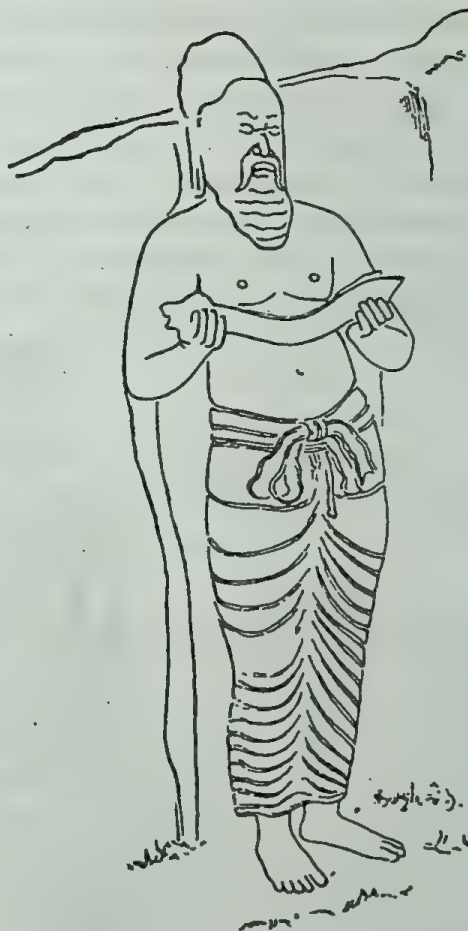
South India, is always represented in sculpture carrying a book in his left hand and in one of the bronzes of his has actually a verse from one of his works inscribed on the leaf in letters of the late Coḷa period (Fig. 5). One of the finest sculptures in Ceylon is the sage holding a book in both his hands (Fig. 6). This is differently interpreted by different scholars as Agastya, Tiruvalluvar and Parākramabāhu, a king of Ceylon. However it may be, it is undoubtedly an early representation of a great scholar. In the early Coḷa painting representing Śiva disguised as the old man come to fetch Sundaramūrti, he is represented as carrying an umbrella in one hand and a palm-leaf document in the other.

The very name of a document, *patra* suggests its origin. The earliest material used for writing was the leaf. It may have been *tālapatra* or *bhūrjapatra* cut to proper shape,



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FIG. 5



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FIG. 6

the former being popular in the Deccan and the latter in North India. A page is also connoted by the same term. The term *panna* occurs in Buddhist literature and writing on a leaf is often referred to in the *Jātakas* (II, p. 122 ; IV, p. 35 ; VI, p. 204). The antiquity of the palm leaf as writing material has been well established by Bühler, who cites (a) Huiien Tsang (seventh century A.D.), an eye witness for its use, (b) some fragments of palm manuscripts of the Godfrey collection of the fourth century A.D. and early copper-plates of about the Christian era modelled after palm leaf, and (c) Buddhist traditions that the canon was written on palm leaves at the first Council soon after Buddha's death (Bühler, Appendix to *Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 94). The terms *grantha* and *prabandha* suggest a book composed of a number of leaves properly arranged and tied together. The words *kāṇḍa*, *sarga* and *paṭala*, terms for portions of a work, also convey this sense.

The word *olai* in Tamil is significant in this connection as it specifically means the palm-leaf used for writing. The calendar carried by the astrologer who is an adjunct to temples is referred to a *Nalolai* in inscriptions (*S. Ind. Inscr.* III, p. 321). A document is styled

Arai-olai (Ibid. pp. 163 and 275) and the officers who noted the oral orders of the sovereign were called *Mandira volai* and *Olaināyagan* all based on the palm-leaf used for writing. There is an interesting statement in an inscription how actually the king graciously ordered that his instructions may be entered into accounts and the order was written by the *Mandiravolai* and issued with the signatures of the *Olaināyakam* officers (Ibid. p. 312). The process of writing itself is described as *variylittu*, i.e., putting in lines. The process of transferring the royal command, first copied on palm-leaf, to more permanent material like stone, is picturesquely described in an inscription from Tiruvālangāḍu, where the personality of the great emperor Rājendracōla, who allowed his officials to bother him even at such odd hours as when he was engaged in dining, recalls the magnanimous spirit of Aśoka, who similarly allowed himself to be disturbed at all hours. The emperor while dining in his day residence at Śivapuri being informed by one of his officials that twenty-five families may be settled on the land in the village to be called Rājendracōlappādi to supply oil to the deity at Tiruvālangāḍu granted the wish and the order was received with the signature of the royal secretary (*Tirumandiravolai*) and conveyed to the magistrate who ordered it to be engraved on stone to prevent anyone from disobeying the royal order (Ibid. p. 136).

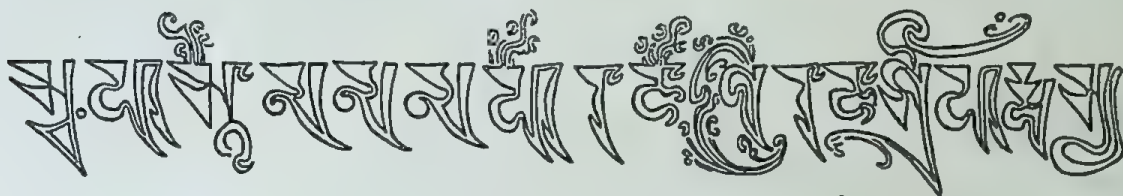
Another term for a document is *lekha* which is derived from the root *likh*, to write. The term *lipi* is also used and a well-known instance is the *dhamma-lipi* of the emperor Aśoka—इयं धम्मलिपि लिखापिता, i.e., this moral treatise or document has been incised. The term *likhāpitā* suggests the incising of the letters and the word *lipi* suggests the painting of the letters. The use of the term *lekha* also suggests the transferring of the document, drafted in ink or *maṣī* from a less permanent material as was obviously used for such purposes to a more permanent medium like a stone tablet in imperishable incised letters.

Copper plate grants that are found in such large numbers all over India are copies of originals from the royal archives or from those of the nobles. They were intended for the donees who kept them carefully to establish their right to the gifted land or other property. Elaborate descriptions there are of how a king made a gift. The king with his hand purified by the touch of the cow's ear and kuśa-grass poured water and made the gift with the words that it may last for ever गोकर्णकुशलतापूतकरतिलोदकपूर्वमाचन्द्रार्कं यावत् शासनीकृत्य प्रदत्तः (Epigraph. Ind. XIII, p. 297). The recording of the facts of the gift are also expressly maintained, sometimes even the metal composing the charter being alluded to (Ibid. VIII, p. 142; XV, p. 143, III, p. 353). That the charter was intended for establishing claims by exhibiting it is also made clear in some inscriptions (Ibid. VI, p. 142). The giving of the charter itself is sometimes recorded in it as in the Mayidavolu plates (Ibid. VI, p. 88).

As already pointed out, the commands of the king were recorded on leaf or birch bark by a keeper of records like the *Ākṣapaṭalika* or *Divirapati* according to the instructions of the messenger (*Dūtaka*) usually the minister, *Pramātr* or *Mahāsāndhivigrahika* or *Rahasika*, who conveyed it to him (Ibid. I, p. 318; p. 73; p. 88; p. 9) and passed on to the engraver.

SIGNATURE.

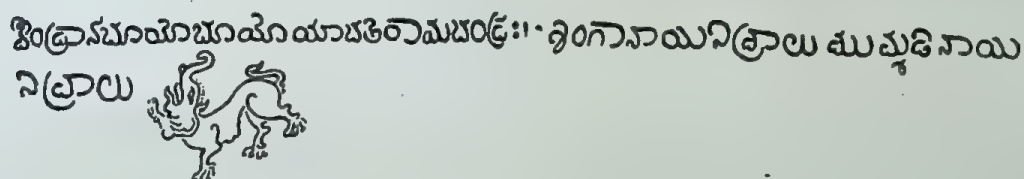
The final stamp of authority was with the affixing of the signature and seal. The former was usually done by expressing the name of the king prefixed by the phrase *Svahasto mama*. A classical example of this is the signature of Śrī Harṣavardhana (Fig. 7). It is easily



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FIG. 7.

the best preserved, highly florid and most artistically drawn royal signature yet found in India. It has led one of the scholars in the epigraphical field to wonder how the king could find time in the midst of his military conquests and administrative and literary activities for such florid signatures to be affixed to documents. In Telugu grants, the name of the king was suffixed by the term *Vrālu* meaning 'signature,' as in *Singdnāyānivārlu* (Fig. 8) or some-



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FIG. 8.

times the word 'signature of' was omitted and merely the name of the king was given as in Vijayanagara grants. In the Vijayanagara grants, it was however only sometimes that the king's name was given, as for instance, *Śrī Harihara* (Fig. 9) but sometimes the name of the



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FIG. 9.

great deity of the principal temple at Hampi Śrī Virūpākṣa was put down instead, suggesting that the king was acting on behalf of the Lord himself. There are many instances of the king's name with the word *Svahasto mama* like that of Bhoja of Dhārā—*Svahastoyam Śrī Bhojadevasya* (Ibid. XI, p. 182). Sometimes it was only the king's name as *Śrī Mūlarājasya* (Ibid. X, p. 79) or sometimes merely *Svahasto mama* (Ibid. I, p. 88) which was felt sufficient as the seal was also given.

Fig. 7.—स्वहस्तो मम महाराजाधिराजश्रीहर्षस्य

Fig. 8.—వేంకటాద్రి భూయోభూయో యాచతే రామచంద్రః!—శింగనాయని వాలు ముమ్మిడినాయని వాలు

Fig. 9.—శ్రీహరిహర

SEAL.

The seal affixed to a document was considered the most important element to proclaim its validity and the *dharmasāstras* demand its use. In the drama *Mudrārākṣasa* Rākṣasa the minister of the Nandas, wonders whether he can deny the validity of a document bearing his own seal, although he was not responsible for its issue (लेखोऽयं न ममेति नोत्तरमिदं मुद्रा मदीया यतः—*Mudrārākṣasa* V, 18). So the seal counted for everything as in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Sītā trusts Hanumān as Rāma's messenger only on the presentation of the signet ring of Rāma with his name engraved on it विश्वासार्थं त्वानीतं तेन दत्तं हनिन्दिते । रामनामाङ्कितं चेदं पश्यदेव्यङ्गुलीयकम् (*Rāmāyaṇa* V, 36,2). The signet ring was sometimes the seal itself but often there were separate larger seals. India abounds in seals of various types found all over the land. There are private seals, seals of guilds, seals of high officials and dignitaries, noblemen, seals of generals, ministers; royal seals including those of princes; there are also seals of institutions like the *Vihāra* of Nālandā, religious and votive seals with such legends as the usual Buddhist creed 'Ye dharmā, etc.' The earliest seals in India from Mohenjo-daro are not yet understood as their script has not yet been deciphered. The scheme of representing a motif like an animal or some object of importance together with a legend is, however, found repeated in later seals as well. Even in coins, the same method has been adopted.

In Samudragupta's Allahabad inscription, the respectful offerings of seals with the mark of *Garuda* from his numerous *Sāmantas* is specially mentioned. An example of the Gupta royal seal is also given (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, pl. XXXVII). The royal seal was usually a model of fine workmanship. The seal of Śarvavarman Maukhari is an example of fine artistic work (Ibid, pl. XXX). The bull, the *lāñchana* of this house, is very well represented. Similarly the bull is found on the seal of Maitraka Bhaṭārka (Ibid, pl. XXIV) and on the Sonpat seal of Harṣavardhana (Ibid, pl. XXXII). The *Varāha* was the *lāñchana* for a number of dynasties; the Western Cālukyas, the Kākatīyas after them and the Vijayanagara rulers still later. The elephant adorned the seal of the Western Ganga while the bull was chosen by the Eastern Gangas. The bull also adorned the Pallava seal. The tiger was the emblem of the Coḷas and it was placed as suzerain over the fish and bow emblems respectively of the Pāṇdyas and Ceras, the royal umbrella and chauris being shown above the tiger suggesting overlordship. Similarly in the case of the *Varāha* signifying the royal house of the Cālukyas the various *Rāja-cihnas* or the royal emblems like the parasol, chauris, auspicious lamps, conch, lotus were shown. The conch and lotus signify the *nidhis* (*kośa*) of the king, the umbrella and chauris power, and the *ankuśa* and spear *daṇḍa* or military strength, the lamps the brilliance of the king, and the sun and moon the glory of the house till eternity (i.e., till the sun and moon last). These emblems of the king are actually enumerated in some of the Eastern Ganga grants, the conch, golden chauri, white umbrella, bull emblem, etc. गोकर्णस्वामिनः प्रसादात्समासादितैकशङ्खभेरीपञ्चमहाशब्दधवलच्छत्रहेमचामरवरवृषभ लान्छनसमुज्ज्वलसमस्तसाम्राज्यमहिम्ना (Epigraph. Ind. IV, p. 189). The seal of the Pāla kings of Bengal is a beautiful

સજ્જાતિગ્રામિણ્યુચ નિધિજ્ઞાનિસદ્યુતેઃ
 પ્રિયજાત્યુતિજ્ઞાત્યુ રાજાનિજ્ઞાત્યુતિજ્ઞાત્યુ

C.S. del.

FIG. 12.

The seal of Rājendra for the Tiruvālangādu plates suggests his conquest and power (pl. II-a). It is a fitting appendage to the most remarkable collection of copper plates strung on one ring, a more real epigraphical curio than the Paihān plates. The bull on the seal of the Taṇḍamtottam plates is also of exquisite workmanship. The lion on the seal of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin plates (pl. III-b) is realistic with its mouth open, paw raised and the tail looped. Of the exquisite elephant on the fifth century Western Ganga seal of the Penugonḍa plates of Mādhava II, it would suffice to say that the beautiful letters of the inscription are matched by the realistic elephant done by the goldsmith Aiya, whose son Apāpa engraved the letters (Ibid, XIV p. 335). An epithet like *Śrī Tribhuvanāṅkuṣa* occurs with boar emblem on Eastern Cālukyam seals (pl. III-c) some of which are works of āra (pl. IV.)

The seal was generally of metal, the royal seal of gold, and it was applied to a flattened ball of clay affixed to the document of which there are numerous instances in literature (*Dhammapad-Aṭṭha-Kathā—Buddhist Legends* I, p. 165). Even now there are to be seen on the backs of seals the impressions of the leaf documents to which they were affixed and of the holes for the string used for binding the sheets. A picturesque example of the use of the seal, and the clay presented for the purpose of stamping the seal is given in the *Harsacarita*.

“During the king’s stay there, the village notary appeared with his whole retinue of clerks, and saying ‘Let his Majesty whose edicts are never void, even now bestow upon us his commands for the day,’ so presented a new-made golden seal with a bull for its emblem. The king took it. As soon, however, as a ball of earth was produced, the seal slipped from the king’s hand and fell face downwards upon the ground, and the lines of the letters were distinctly marked upon the nearly dry mud and soft earth of the Sarasvati’s bank. Apprehensive of an evil omen, the courtiers were depressed, but the king thought in his heart : ‘The minds of the dull are indeed blind to reality. The omen signifies that the earth shall be stamped with the single seal of my sole command ; but the rustics interpret otherwise.’ Having thus mentally welcomed the omen, he bestowed upon the Brahmans a hundred villages delimited by a thousand ploughs”. (*Harsacarita*, trans. Cowell, p. 198). The original document on perishable material was kept by the *Akṣapatalika* or the keeper of the records.

FIG. 12.—मण्डलाग्राग्रनिष्पेषनिष्पिष्टारातिसङ्घनेः ।

श्रीमतोप्रतिष्ठाङ्कस्य रणभीतस्य शासनम् ॥

The more important copy, made on metal sheets which were strung on a ring with a facsimile seal made of metal affixed to it—not a mere sealing on clay—was presented to the person concerned. Surely the grants are embellished by the addition of such fine seals as remarked by Bāṇa (*Harṣacarita*, p. 284). Before, however, it was given away, it was compared with the original as may be seen actually recorded occasionally in the words *dr̥ṣṭam* 'seen.'

INSCRIPTIONS, THEIR FORM AND CONTENTS.

In India it has always been a habit to introduce auspicious utterances in works of any nature.

There is practically no work, literary, scientific or philosophical, without a *mangala śloka* or *mangalavacana*, i.e., auspicious verse or word at the beginning. The *mangalas* may be of three kinds, *āśīh* or benediction, *namaskriyā* or salutation to the deity, or *vastunir-ddeśa* or suggestion of *mangala* while abruptly beginning the topic. This has been followed in all written documents. The inscriptions on stone, metal plates and other materials follow the same arrangement.

In many early inscriptions, there are a number of auspicious symbols in addition to salutation. The salutation is generally short and in prose, though soon it develops into beautiful verses in praise of deities. Thus the symbols, *Svastika* and *Śrīvatsa* occur in the Hathigumpha inscription of Khāravela to suggest *svastiśrī*, a form which in actual writing marks the beginning of Cālukyan grants—स्वस्ति श्रीमतां, etc. This is in addition to the brief salutation to the Jinas. The same symbols which occur as auspicious ending in some early inscriptions occur in words in many mediaeval inscriptions in the form, संगले महाश्रीः. Aśoka's inscriptions are examples of *vastunirddeśa* type of *mangala* as the word देवानां पिय begins with the auspicious word Deva—god. In the caves of Western India there are numerous examples of these symbols of auspiciousness. Sometimes *Namo* or Salutation is expressed by the symbol which is usually referred to by writers as Wheel on *Trisūla*. The symbols of a Drum and *Bodhi* tree also occur, the former probably representing *praṇava* or *Omkāra* or *Bhagavān* and the latter *Nārāyaṇa* (as *Aśvattha-nārāyaṇa*). The symbols in the Nanaghat cave are additional to the salutation to *San-karṣaṇa*, *Vāsudeva*, *Indra*, *Candra*, *Sūrya* and other deities. At Amaravati the symbols are used along with salutations to Buddha. Sometimes the word *Siddham* is used.

In early copper plate grants as in some of the early charters including Prakrit ones of the Pallavas, the early Western Ganga plates of Mādhavavarman, Viṣṇukunḍins, and the earliest copper plates from Kalinga, *svasti* is used in the marginal space almost pushing in one of the central lines of the first plate. Similarly, *siddham* is used in early Kadamba, Nala and other inscriptions as in those of the Guptas and Yaśodharman. *Dr̥ṣṭam* is believed to be another auspicious word used as in some early Pallava Prakrit charters and those of the

Vākātakas. But it is most probably intended to convey the idea that the copy on the copper plate has been compared with the original and found correct. *Om* is expressed by spiral symbol in Western Cālukyan and Rāṣtrakūṭa inscriptions which they begin. There are other forms like जितं भगवता in early Western Ganga and Pallava charters; ओं नमः शिवाय *Epigraph Ind.* II, p. 10, 410; VI, p. 200; XIX, p. 279), नमो बुद्धाय (Ibid, VI, p. 287), नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय (Ibid, II, p. 350 XIII, p. 290). नमो ब्रह्मणे (Ibid, II, p. 3; XIX, p. 211), नमः सरस्वत्यै or भारत्यै (Ibid, II, pp. 182, 333). श्री गणाधिपतये नमः begins all later Vijayanagar grants.

Salutations to Śiva and Viṣṇu in beautiful verses are plentiful. Some are addressed to Devī also. Other salutations are to Viṣṇu on the serpent couch or as Narasimha (Ibid, XIX, p. 241), Trivikrama, Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, Padmanābha or as the sportive consort of Lakṣmī (see Gāhaḍavāla inscriptions from Kanauj). He is most popular as the Ādivarāha rescuing *Prthvī* in which form his praise begins all the inscriptions of later Cālukyas, Kākatīyas, Yādavas, Reddis and Vijayanagar kings. Beautiful praises of Śiva and Viṣṇu occur in the Gupta inscriptions and the salutation to Śiva in the Meharauli inscription and those of Yaśodharman are splendid examples of their kind. There are also salutations to Sūrya couched in the most elegant language. Salutation to Gaṇapati precedes that of other deities in some inscriptions (Ibid, II, pp. 119, 276; XIII, p. 200; XIX, p. 49), principally of the Reddis and Vijayanagar monarchs. There are instances of Brahma and Sarasvatī praised in some inscriptions. *Brahma* in the abstract form is also occasionally invoked (Ibid, XIX, p. 211). Salutation to Jinas begins all Jain inscriptions which abound in the Canarese country and Northern Gujarat. Mañjuḥoṣa (Ibid, XIX, p. 296), Vasudhārā, Mañjuśrī and other Buddhist deities are also invoked at the commencement of certain charters. Often these verses contain details which help iconographic study (Sivaramamurti 4).

After the salutation, the pedigree of the ruler, the donor, is given. Three generations at least are mentioned. To take concrete cases, the Western Ganga king, Mādhava II mentions in his copper plate his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Ayyavarman, Mādhava and Śrī-Konkaṇivarman respectively, and a short account of their exploits in addition to those of his own as the donor. Similarly, the Pallava king Simhavarman mentions his great-grandfather Mahārāja Śrī Viravarman his grandfather Mahārāja Skandavarman and father Yuvamahārāja Viṣṇugopa as repositories of penance and prowess, learned in *Śāstras*, abiding by the law and so forth. In the Valabhi grants, the founder Bhaṭārka is mentioned and his glorious successors preceding the donor are described in beautiful embellished prose passages. In the inscriptions of the Guptas, the family tree up to the time of the king when the inscription is incised is given. The Mahārājādhirāja Samudragupta, exterminator of all kings, without one of equal power in the world, whose fame was tasted by the waters of the four oceans, equal to Dhanada, Varuṇa, Indra and Antaka, the very axe of Kṛtānta, performer of Aśvamedha, is mentioned as the great-grandson of Mahārāja Gupta, grandson of Mahārāja Ghaṭotkaca, son of Mahārājādhirāja Candragupta and daughter's son of Licchavi

by his mother, queen Kumāradevī ; his son is mentioned as Mahārājādhirāja Candragupta by queen Dattadevī ; his son is mentioned as Mahārājādhirāja Kumāragupta born of Dhruvadevī and his son Skandagupta of great glory subsisting like a bee on the widespread water-lilies which were the feet of his father. The phrase of *Mātā-pitr-pādānudhyāta* (i.e., contemplating on the feet of the parents) is a very common feature in most North Indian inscriptions together with the mention of father as well as mother which custom is continued from the practice observed in Gupta inscriptions. An excellent example of this is found in the copper plate grants of Harṣavardhana where Mahārāja Śrī-Naravardhana is mentioned first, then his son that contemplated on his feet Mahārāja Śrī-Rājyavardhana born of queen Vajrinidevī and a great devotee of Sūrya, his son that contemplated on his feet Ādityavardhana born of queen Apsarodevī and also a great devotee of Sūrya, his son that contemplated on his feet Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī-Prabhākaravardhana born of queen Mahāsenaguptadevī and also a great devotee of Sūrya and his son that contemplated on his feet Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī-Rājyavardhana born of queen Yaśomati and follower of Buddha, and finally is his brother Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Harṣavardhana, great devotee of Śiva, Paramamahēśvara. From this, it can be easily seen that in the same family there are Paramādityabhaktas, Paramasaugatas, Paramamahēśvaras and even Paramabhāgavatas. The Guptas were mostly Paramabhāgavatas, followers of Viṣṇu. The pedigree portion thus brought into the inscriptions forms a very important source for historians in settling successions and dating the grants where definite dating is not clear. When there are, for example, two or three Narasimhavarmans or two or three Mādhavavarmans, the names of the predecessors help in the correct location of the ruler concerned.

Sometimes, the mythical origin of the family of the donor is mentioned. When the family is *Sūryavamśa*, it is so described with poetic exuberance ; similarly, in the case of *Candravamśa*, the moon is praised in verses often full of poetic skill as the theme lends itself to excellent description. Sometimes is described his origin along with Lakṣmī from the milky ocean, sometimes from Atri and mostly in his role as the crest-jewel of Śiva. Sometimes the mythical origin of a royal family from the fire of Vasiṣṭha on Mount Arbuda is described at some length.

Sometimes the special favour shown to the family by gods or sages is mentioned. Thus in Cālukyan grants, the special kindness shown to the rulers of this house by the Lord of Kauśiki (Śiva) who gave them their kingdom, by Mahāsenā whose feet they adored, the Saptamātrkāś who were their protectors and Nārāyaṇa whose gift of the boar emblem assured them victory is always mentioned. In the Eastern Ganga grants, the kings of the dynasty are described as washed of all sins by their salutation to the pair of lotus feet of the Lord Gokarṇa on the Mahendra Mountain. In the Vākāṭaka grants, the Bhāraśivas are described as specially favoured by Śiva because they carry the *Śivalinga* on their shoulder.

Some early legendary ancestor is often mentioned with great pride, as, for instance, Karikāla in the Tiruvālangādu plates of Rājendracōla. The great esteem in which the royal family was held by venerable men is sometimes mentioned, as in the Sinnamaññūr plates where the Pāṇḍya kings are described as honoured by the sage Agastya acting as their priest. Exploits of the king, the donor of the grant, are mentioned in what are known in Tamil as *Meykīrtis*. The *Meykīrtis* in the Tamil inscriptions of the Coḷas and the Pāṇḍyas differed with different kings and grew in length with every fresh victory. Such exploits are also vividly described in Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions and are called *Praśastis*, the Sanskrit for *Meykīrti* in Tamil. Of such *Praśastis*, those of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi in the Nasik cave, of Khāravēla in Hathigumpha, of Rudradāman in Girnar, of Samudragupta in the Allahabad Pillar inscription and of Yaśōdharman in the Mandasor stone inscription are famous. The first two are in Prakrit, the rest being in Sanskrit.

The purpose of the inscription is then stated. The donee is mentioned. Sometimes it is a general who had distinguished himself in battle and earned the honour at the hands of the king, as in the Eastern Cālukyan grant of Amma I, where the king mentions the prowess of his general Bhaṇḍanāditya alias Kuntāditya to whom he made over certain villages (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 38). Sometimes it is a presentation of land, for the daily worship, *caru*, *bali* and other offerings, *dhūpa*, *dīpa* and other adjuncts of worship and for the maintenance of flower garden, etc., for the *pūjā* requirements of some temple. Sometimes the grant mentions the gift of land made by the king in recognition and appreciation of the musical talents of a songstress of repute. But mostly, the grants record the gifts of the king to distinguished scholars in the *Vedas* and *Śāstras* and for *Bhaṭṭavṛtti* or honorary professorship for freely imparting Śāstric and Vedic knowledge. In such cases, the donee's name is mentioned and occasionally his pedigree as well, but invariably his *gotra*, *śākhā* and special proficiency are mentioned. Sometimes it is a *Kramapāṭhi* or a *Ghanapāṭhi*, or a *Yājñika*, *Agnihotrin* or *Yajvā* or a *Bahvṛcacaraṇa*, a *Caturveda*, a *Triveda*, *Dīkṣita*, *Dviveda*, *Śrotriya* or *Upādhyāya*. Whether the donee was a student of *Rg*, *Yajus* or *Sāma Veda* is made clear by the mention of a *śākhā*. For those who are interested in the study of geographical distribution of the *Vedas*, with special reference to their schools like the *Vājasaneyā*, *Taittirīya*, *Mādhyandina*, *Kaṭha*, *Kauthuma* and so on and for the distribution of *gotras* like *Vasiṣṭha*, *Bhārgava*, *Gautama*, *Vatsa*, *Bhāradvāja*, *Mudgala*, *Śāṇḍilya*, *Kautsa*, *Kāśyapa*, etc., and the mode of their occurrence, these inscriptions are valuable.

Where the gifts are made to institutions like a temple or a *Maṭha* or a *Ghaṭikā*, there is a mention of some special committee or elders of the village or elected members of the village assembly called on to protect the gift or charitable endowment and the endowment itself is described with minute details.

These grants were usually made on auspicious occasions and the time chosen is always specifically given. May be it is a solar eclipse or a lunar eclipse or the time of some auspicious

constellation of planets. These help in the accurate fixing of the dates in terms of the corresponding dates of the Christian era. In the earlier Prakrit inscriptions, the regnal year of the king, the *pakṣa*, the *ṛtu* or season and the day or *dina* are given. In the Khāravēla inscription, the number of years from the time of the Nandas is given. In the Gupta inscriptions the date according to the Gupta era is given. In the Western Cālukyan inscription of Mangaleśa at Badami, the Śaka era is mentioned. In all mediæval inscriptions, the Vikrama era or Śalivahana śaka era is mentioned. In the Eastern Ganga inscriptions the Ganga era is mentioned. The exact date of the Ganga era in the fifth century A.D. has been fixed by accurate mathematical calculation by Vepa Ramesam. There are other eras like the Cedi era and Harṣa era which are of secondary importance. In mediæval inscriptions, the broad classification of *ṛtu* and *dina* is absent but greater detail is introduced by giving the *ayāna*, *māsa*, *pakṣa*, *tithi*, *vāra*, *nakṣatra* and any peculiar phenomenon such as an eclipse. These details help the modern astronomer in correctly fixing the date.

The purpose of the grant is then specified, the extent of the land granted, the boundaries and other particulars. These details give sometimes the names of hamlets, adjoining areas, trees, wells, lakes, river bank and so forth. Even in Sanskrit inscriptions, the names of these occur in the local language, as, for instance, in making the gift of the village Maliyapūṇḍi, its boundaries given are in Telugu, Munjunyūru in the east, Yinimili in the south, Kalvakūru in the west and Dharmavuramu in the north. The boundaries of the fields of this village are *Gollanigunṭa* pond in the east, the tank *Raviaperiaceru* in the south-east, a demarcation stone in the south and south-west, *Malkapaṛṇu* and a tank *Koraboyutaṭāka* in the west, a demarcation stone in the north-west, a tank *Dubaceruvu* in the north, the north-east boundary being the same as that of the field *Evvakacenu* in Kalvakūru (*Epigraph Ind.* IX, p. 56). It may be remarked that similar vernacularizations occur for describing local weights, measures, and different items of offerings and we have examples of Guzratiscisms (*Ibid*, I, p. 271) and Marathisms (*Ibid*, I, p. 338) in some late mediæval inscriptions of which Bühler and Kielhorn have given a useful list (*Ibid*, I, p. 163).

At the end of the inscriptions there are the usual imprecatory verses which generally vary in number, sometimes long and occasionally restricted to a single verse. The imprecatory verses in Prakrit charters are sometimes in Sanskrit. In other charters the imprecatory verses are in Sanskrit. Some inscriptions in Tamil, Telugu and Canarese, however, have short imprecatory prose passages in the language of the inscriptions.

In early inscriptions this is rather simple. The sin of killing a cow and a Brahman and the guilt of five sins are pronounced for those who violate the *dharma* य इच्छिन्वात्स गोब्रह्महत्या संयुक्तो भवेत् पञ्चमिश्रानन्तर्यैः (*Fleet, C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 32) ; यत्रैनं धर्मस्कन्धं व्युच्छिन्नात् स पञ्चमहापातकैः संयुक्तः स्यादिति (*Ibid*, pp. 38, 40). The sin of killing a cow, teacher and Brahman and minor

sins in addition to the five heinous sins are mentioned in an imprecatory verse in another Gupta inscription (Ibid. p. 71).

In the early Prakrit charter from Mayidavolu, king Śivaskandavarman threatens corporal punishment to one who causes trouble or annoyance to the donee by transgressing his orders जो अहं सासनं अतिष्ठितुना पीला बाधा करेजा वा त कारापेज वा तस अहो सारीरं सासनं करेजामो (*Epigraph Ind.* VI, p. 87; also, Ibid, VIII, p. 162 in Simhavarman's charter, Ibid, VIII, p. 235 in Kumāraśiṣṇu's copper plate, and Ibid, III, p. 146 in Nandivarman's copper plate). This is what a king can do when he is alive and in power to enforce his word. But it is not possible for all time. So divine wrath is invoked for assuring protection to the gift. There is also a prayer put forth to all future kings to take care of gifts of former kings. In this, the most powerful kings with one accord repeat the evanescence of wealth and the fleeting nature of their own glory and request with folded hands their successors in power for all time to protect their gifts. Here they cite the mighty king Rāmabhadra of Ayodhyā as requesting all future kings to protect the gifts of former kings.

The Gupta king Pravarasena, like Śivaskandavarman, threatens punishment and fine to those who give even the slightest trouble to the donees, if they were denounced as culprits by the Brāhmaṇas. He adds that he is silent about the many gifts of former kings which he has protected to avoid such boasts. He orders all contemporary kings to protect his own gifts. Here one or two verses of Vyāsa are introduced in support of protection of gifts.

यथास्मच्छासनमगणयमानः स्वल्पमपि परिबाधां कुर्यात्कारयिता वा
तस्य ब्राह्मणैर्वेदितस्य सदण्डनिग्रहं कुर्याम । अस्मिन् च धर्मादरकरणे-
अतीतानेकराजदत्तसंचिन्तनपरिपालनं कृतपुण्यानुकीर्तनपरिहारार्थं
न कीर्तयामः संकल्पाभियोगपराक्रमोपजातान्वर्तमानानाज्ञापयामः
एष्यत्कालप्रभविष्णुगौरवाद्भविष्यान्विज्ञापयामः—व्यासगीताश्चात्र
श्लोकाः—स्वदत्तां परदत्तां वा यो हरेत वसुन्धराम् । गवां शतसहस्रस्य
हर्तुर्हरति किल्बिषम् ॥

(Ibid, III, p. 262 and Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 247).

Warding off of all troubles from the donee being a very important thing, the kings made necessary provisions in the charters ; अचाटभट्टप्रावेक्ष्य land was not to be a thoroughfare for *chāṭas* and *bhaṭas* (*Epigraph Ind.* XII, p. 36, Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 98 and *Epigraph Ind.* XII, p. 141) अमट्टप्रावेक्ष्यम् (Ibid, VI, p. 87) meaning regular troops. In one of the inscriptions even the movement of wind on the donee's land is sought to be controlled recalling Hanumān's remark in Lankā वायुरप्यत्र नाज्ञातभरेदिति मतिर्मम (*Rāmāyaṇa*, V, 2-44).

The imprecatory verses grew in length in the later charters and we have all forms of curses heaped on the head of the wrongdoer. Bhagavān Vyāsa is quoted. Many kings like Sagara and others have donated lands and many have protected the gifts and the fruit of the gifts have also been enjoyed by the owners of the land. Sixty thousand years of heavenly bliss is assured for the land donor, and hell for one disapproving the gift. The pilferers of Brahmadeya are born as dark cobras in the Vindhya forests bereft of water and live in the dried up hollows of trees.

बहुभिर्वसुधा दत्ता बहुभिश्चानुपालिता । यस्य यस्य
यदा भूमिस्तस्यत स्य तदा फलम् ॥ षष्टिं वर्षसहस्राणि स्वर्गे
मोदति भूमिदः । अच्छेत्ता चानुमन्ता च तान्येव नरके वसेत् ॥
विन्ध्याटवीवतोयासु गुष्ककोटरवासिनः । कृष्णाहयो हि
जायन्ते ब्रह्मदेयापहारकाः ॥

(*Epigraph Ind.* VI, p. 211).

The length of the imprecatory verses increased further in other grants. Vedic quotations and the *dharma-śāstra* are mentioned as authorities. The gift is described as granted for successive generations, as in the words of the *Veda* 'Growing from every clump created in hundreds and growing into thousands.' To allow the enjoyment in succession in the donees' family and out of respect for the king and *dharma*, not the least annoyance should be caused to the donee. Then are conjured up the visions of hell and heaven for the destroyers and protectors of grants respectively. Protection of others' gifts has greater fruit than that born of one's own gifts. It assures the merit of thousands of *Aśvamedhas*, hundreds of *Vājapeya*, and numerous *Paṇḍarika* sacrifices. Eleven generations of *Pitrs* (forefathers), even if suffering in hell, ascend to heaven and immortal bliss by the act. But one who despoils land given by himself or by some other is born as a worm in a refuse heap and is tormented along with his *Pitrs*. One who steals even a single gold coin or cow or an inch of land is condemned to hell till the great deluge. Of all gifts, that of land is the best ; it overcomes all accumulated sin of æons. Eleven generations of the donor's family suffering in hell free themselves by the gift of land like a serpent issuing from its cover ; twenty-four generations of *Pitrs* including the donor ascend heaven step by step casting off the cloak of sin. Such is the merit of the fruit (gift) ; but the plunderer of land destroys the fruit. The pilferer of land cannot cleanse himself of his evil even by the performance of thousands of *Aśvamedhas* and hundreds of *Vājapeya* sacrifices and by the gift of tens of thousands of cows. Even metal dust, stone powder and poison may be digested but who is it in the three worlds that can digest *Brahmasva* ? Sacrifices are spoilt by the utterance of falsehood, penance is diminished by pride ; but a swindler of land brings down to hell twenty-one generations of ancestors. Realising that life is ephemeral like water drops on tips of grass blades

and like water bubbles, reputation and righteous conduct should not be allowed to dwindle. The voice of the *Veda* and *Smrtis* proclaim to the Rsis and gods, 'such is a land plunderer'; hence, Oh men! do not plunder, Oh! do not plunder. Just as a drop of oil on water spreads, so grows the gift of land. The father's chuckle and the fore-fathers skip about in joy at the thought that in their family would be born a land-donor who would be their refuge. The gods Āditya, Varuṇa, Viṣṇu, Brahma, Soma, Agni and Śiva applaud the land-donor. The giver of land and its recipient, both of meritorious action, surely go to heaven. Thus reflecting on the fleeting nature of fortune and life, like a drop of water on a lotus leaf, and understanding all that has been thus explained, men should never destroy the gifts of others (Ibid, XII, pp. 324-325).

The last verse which refers to the evanescent nature of fortune and the short span of life allotted to man occurs in earlier grants like that of the emperor Harṣavardhana. In a preceding verse the monarch admonishes future kings in his own line conscious of great and noble lineage, and reminds them that it is obligatory on their part to protect the gifts of their ancestors before they gloat over their ancestry.

This gift should be protected by those that claim our noble lineage and also by other kings realising that a gift and its protection alone are the fruit of fortune which is fickle like the lightning and the water bubble (Ibid, IV, p. 211).

SCRIBES.

One of the most important sculptures from Egypt is a wooden figure of a scribe from Thebes, now in the Cairo Museum. The scribe was a prominent figure in the ancient world. Ornamental letters were often written with the greatest care and dexterity by scribes. The lay public though well educated sought to avoid writing as the scribe's handwriting was distinctly superior. This is evident from the remark of Cāṇakya that even though written with utmost care the letters of a *Śrotriya* (Vedic scholar) like himself would be far from clear श्रोत्रियाक्षराणि प्रयत्नलिखितान्यपि नियतमस्फुटानि भवन्ति (*Mudrārākṣasa*, Act I) and he prefers the services of a scribe; and when the final draft is brought to him he admires the letters जहो दर्शनीयान्यक्षराणि (Ibid, Act I). It was very often expert craftsmen that undertook the task of inscribing. But official documents on less permanent material like leaf, bark and cloth were executed by trained scribes. These were known as *lekhakas*. Some of extraordinary ability were chosen to work in the royal palace and, being special officers under the king, were known as *rājalekhakas*. There is mention of a *rājalekhaka*—a king's scribe—in one of the donative inscriptions from Amaravati, wherein is recorded his quota of embellishment to the stūpa of the Enlightened One. An early example of a *rājalekhaka* in sculpture, not quite so remote in date from this inscription and at no great distance

from its findspot, is from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Fig. 13). The scribe is shown here casting the



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FIG. 13.

horoscope and recording the predictions of the astrologers who were summoned by Śuddhodana for knowing the future of his new-born son, Siddhārtha. He holds the cut leaves in the left hand on his lap and is rapidly incising the lines with an iron style with a large and convenient handle. *Rājalekhakas* were also known as *rājālipikaras* and this synonym is used for a royal scribe Subāhita Gotiputa, whose donation is recorded at Sanchi (*Epigraph. Ind.* II, p. 102).

The earliest of *lekhakas* in royal service known to us from an inscription is Capaḍa. He is styled *lipikara* and was responsible for the Brahmagiri and Siddāpura version of Aśoka's edicts (Hultzsch *C. Inscr. Ind.* I, p. 176).

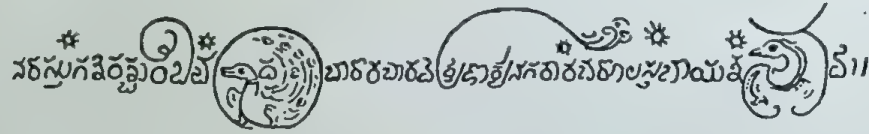
The *lipikaras*, as testified by the inscriptions that they engraved, were sometimes really very skilful at their work and naturally took a great pride in their execution. One Śūkaśiṃha from the Gauda country, engraver of the Aḥṣad inscription of Ādityasena, describes his letters as beautiful विकृताक्षर (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 205). A scribe from Vijayavāḍa (Bezavada) who engraved a charter of the Eastern Cālukyan king Narendramārgarāja is styled *Akṣaralalitācārya*, i.e., expert writer of beautiful letters (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 36). Letters clear and distinct are compared to pearls and gems in all Indian languages. Such a description suggesting the beauty of letters occurs in a well engraved inscription from Bhuvaneśvar—

सूत्रकारः शिवकरः सद्गुणमक्षरावलीम् ।

निचरवान् शिलापट्टे मुक्ताफलनिभामिह ॥

(*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, pp. 202-203). A scribe (*sūtradhāra*) Mahidhara compares the letters of an inscription engraved by him to the stars in the sky. शिलां तथाकरोद्गणैर्निभस्तारकितं यथा (Ibid. II, p. 13). A scribe named Viśala describes his letters as beautiful (Ibid. II, p. 421).

The expression 'engraved in clear letters' is used by the clever Mathura scribe Vāsū in describing his own execution माधुरो ... वासू लिलेख बिमलाक्षरैः (Ibid. XII, p. 46). A *Sūtradhāra* named Sāhila describes his well-cut letters as resembling the Goddess of Learning उत्कीर्णा सूत्रधारेण साहिलेन स्फुटाक्षरा । चित्ताङ्गवान्यग्रवर्णा सरस्वतीव भासते (Ibid. IX, p. 254). The letters are described as soft by another dexterous scribe Nāgamuṇḍi who incised the Vasantagaḍh inscription प्रभाति मृदुभिर्वर्णैः प्रोक्तीर्णा नागमुण्डिना (Ibid. IX, p. 192). Jalhana, the engraver of a copper plate of Govindacandradeva of Kanauj compares himself to Citragupta, the divine scribe, and as he puts it, he did his work with ease and pleasure for earning reputation करणीकोद्गतो बिद्वान् चित्रगुप्तोपमो गुणैः । यशसे जलहणः श्रीमानलिखत्ताम्रकं मुदा ॥ (Ibid. VIII, p. 153). A neatly engraved inscription giving the text of the first two acts of a newly discovered drama, *Pārijātamañjarī* by Madana, gives the name of the engraver Rāmadeva, son of an expert sculptor Sihāka रूपकारप्रकाण्डस्य सीहाकस्याङ्गजन्मना (Ibid. VIII, p. 117). An artist Karṇabhadra whose engraving is perfectly neat is described as an intelligent, courteous and accurate workman कर्णभद्रेण भद्रेण शिल्पिनानल्पबुद्धिना । ताम्रं विनयनद्वेण निर्मितं साधुकर्मणा ॥ (Ibid. II, p. 354). A sculptor Sovaraśi from the Canarese country actually boasts of his skill in one of his inscriptions : 'when he can entwine forms of elephant, lion, parrot and many other forms so as to shine among the letters will you madly compete with such a sculptor, Sovaraśi'—(*Epigraph. Car.* XI. Cd. 47). The boast is not an empty one as may be seen from similar letters engraved in some of the Canarese inscriptions (Fig. 14). The personal experience of a distinguished scribe is recorded at the end of an



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FIG. 14.

inscription by Someśvara who compares himself to a lover painting intently with different colours a picture of his beloved one—

शिल्पविन्मागधः कामी तन्मना वर्णभक्तिभिः ।

सोमेश्वरोऽलित्वदिपां प्रशस्तिं स्वामिव प्रियाम् ..

(*Epigraph. Ind.* XIII, p. 292).

One of the finest specimens of letter engraving on stone is the Tālagunda inscription. The scribe who is also the composer gives his name in the inscription itself as Kubja कुब्जः स्वकाव्यमिदमश्मतले लिलेख (Ibid. VIII, p. 33).

Sometimes the *lipikaras* were anxious to avoid errors of omission or addition ; the validity of the charter is specially emphasized in spite of all missing or redundant syllables క్షాత్రమధికాక్షరం బా సర్వమత్ర ప్రమాణమితి (Ibid. XII, p. 203). The scribe requests people that may read the inscription to forgive any errors of his in the writing వ్రాతతప్పు పట్టకేడు (S. Ind. Inscr. IV, p. 214). In one of the charters the writing is said to have been executed by the person concerned by virtue of his office and the letters suggest that but for his presence in that office he could not have been selected for the writing లిఖితం చ వ్యాపారణయా ధీశ్వరదాసేన (Epigraph. Ind. VIII, p. 287).

But there were also those whose writing provided problems for decipherment. Bühler refers to the *Vikramāṅkadevacarita* of Bilhana where queen Sūryamati does not allow herself to be cheated by 'writers using crooked alphabets'—कायस्थैः कुटिललिपिभिः (Bühler, Ind. Ant. XXXIII, p. 50). *Kuṭila* or crooked letters were most difficult to make out and knowledge of them was considered an attainment కుటిలాక్షరాणि విదुషా. But the *lipi* named *kuṭilalipi* by Princep is no more crooked than any other script and in fact is elegant. And being sometimes more floriated than other scripts has caused great confusion and strain to the eye in following the curves and strokes ; and scribe Tak Nāḍitya from Gauḍa takes pride in being well acquainted with crooked letters . . . లిఖితా గౌడేన కర్ణికేణేవా । కుటిలాక్షరాणि విదుషా తక్షాదిత్యామిథేయేన ॥ (Epigraph. Ind. I, p. 81). The letters of the beautiful Deopara inscription are executed by Śūlapāni who describes himself and rightly as the best among the craftsmen of Vārendra (Bengal) बृहस्पतेः सूत्रिमां प्रशस्तिम् । चलान वारेन्द्रकशिल्पगोष्ठीचूडामणी राणकशूलपाणिः ॥ (Ibid. I, p. 311). The transfer of a manuscript of a *prāśasti* to stone in clear letters incised on it is alluded to in the Mau inscription of Maṇavarman (Ibid. I, p. 197).

Usually after the issue of the oral order of the king which was taken down by a high official of the court like an *Amātya*, *Rahasika*, *Balādhikṛta* or *Sāndhivigrahika*, e.g., Harṣavardhana ordering Avanti, his *Sāndhivigrahika*, (*Harṣacarita*, p. 217), or after the king's approval of a *prāśasti* composed by a poet; the text after having been neatly copied by a *Karaṇika* or *Kāyastha* or *lekhaka* or *lipikara* was incised on metal or cut on stone by a professional engraver (*Sūtradhāra*, *Rūpakara*, *Takṣa* or *Śilpi*) ; but there are instances of the poet himself engraving the letters, like Kubja of the Tālagunda *prāśasti*.

The payment appears to have been fair judging from an inscription, though it is not clear whether it was intended for the composer or the engraver. Yuddhakesari pperumbaṇaik-kāran who wrote the Velvikūḍi grant of Neḍuñjadayān got a house site, two *ma* of wet land and a dry field (Epigraph. Ind. XVII, p. 304).

ORNAMENTAL CHARACTERS.

The genius of each particular script has provided a peculiar form for each letter of the alphabet. The seventh century Nagari script is by itself somewhat florid. Similarly the Canarese script in the Hoysala area of about the 12th to 13th centuries is ornamental. Tenth

century Eastern Cālukyan script has similar decorative charm about it. But the letters of these scripts cannot be said to have any ornamentation introduced deliberately for decorative purpose. It is a natural decorative type. But there are many instances in Indian epigraphy of deliberate ornamentation of letters. Simultaneously we see the use of the regular and ornamental series, for instance in the Banskhera plates of Harṣavardhana, the letters though decorative in shape are of the normal variety, while the signature of the emperor is in a highly floriated type ornamented for decorative purpose. In the Nagari inscription from the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcipuram the numerous *Birudas* of the Pallava monarch are neatly incised in both the simple and ornamental type of letters. In Fig. 15 both the varieties

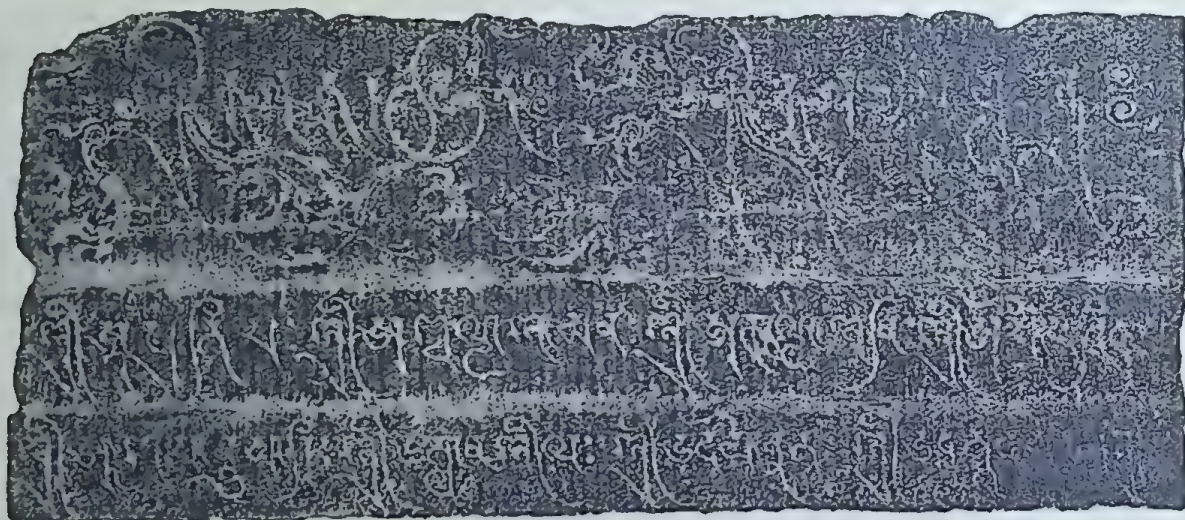


FIG. 15.

are shown. In Fig. 16 which shows one of the *Birudas* in the ornamental type, we can see not only the beautiful sway of curves and lines in creeper fashion but also in their contours,



C.S. del.

FIG. 16.

of the necks and wings of peacocks. The head of the peacock with a decorative plume is deftly introduced in the script and the whole plan of lettering is very clever and presents a pleasing appearance. On a pillar in the temple of Rājīvalocana at Rajīm, in the Central Provinces, is the name of Śrī Pūrṇāditya incised in a similar highly ornamental type of

letters (Fig. 17). Here the letters are so obscured by the peculiar decorative pattern added to them that it is rather difficult to make them out but they can be easily made out by comparing them with the same name in plain letters given along with it by Cunningham (*Arch. Sur. Ind.*



After Cunningham.

FIG. 17.

Rep. XVII, pl. X, p. 19, pl. X). In Western Cālukyan inscriptions which are in Canarese letters this element of decoration exists. An excellent example is the Kurgod inscription of Cālukya Someśvara IV. The *anusvāras* of the invocatory verse are represented by stars arranged above the letters, and wherever the letters lend themselves to decoration they are shaped like animals and birds. Thus one of them is shaped like a swan and another like a peacock. Fleet (*Ind. Ant.* XV, p. 364) has styled them bird characters. The sculptor who incised the *praśasti* takes a just pride for producing such amusing letter shapes. In the *Biruda* labels in Pallava Grantha script at Mahābalipuram and elsewhere the florid and the ordinary type of letters occur together. These ornamental letters, however, do not offer any great difficulty in decipherment as in the case of the so-called shell characters which yet remain a puzzle. An example of shell characters from Central India is given in Fig. 18



C. S. del.

FIG. 18.

(Hunter p. 10). The so-called shell characters occur even in distant Java (Fig. 19) and the name of Pūrṇavarman has been read in one of these by Jayaswal (*Epigraph. Ind.* XXII, p. 4).

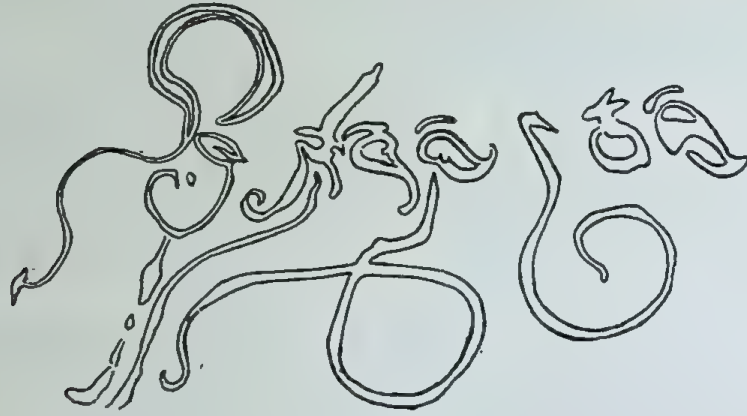


FIG. 19.

C.S. del.

LITERARY VALUE OF INDIAN EPIGRAPHY.

The inscriptions are among the many sources for the study of Sanskrit literature. The language of some at least of the inscriptions is not without charm and is worthy of careful study. The records in copper plates and stone inscriptions are permanent documents and sometimes it is good that Sanskrit poets of repute have composed the *praśastis*. The Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta is an excellent piece of poetry composed by Hariṣeṇa. This elegant composition and its poet would have been lost to the history of Sanskrit literature but for the inscription. Ravikīrti's *praśasti* at Aihole is another instance in point. Though the name of the composer is lost, the importance of the Junāgaḍh inscription of Rudradāman cannot be minimized. It is the earliest pure Sanskrit inscription and the language is most elegant. The Tālaguṇḍa inscription of Kadamba Kākusthavarman is another important contribution to Sanskrit literature and fortunately the name of the poet Kubja is preserved. Here the majority of verses are in a metre which does not occur elsewhere. Sometimes well known poets compose the *praśastis*, as for instance, Umāpatidhara, the author of the famous Deopara inscription. Jayadeva mentions Umāpatidhara as one of the poets of his day, along with Dhoyī, and the *praśasti* is a valuable contribution to Sanskrit literature. In the inscription of Vema, the Redḍi king, it is expressly stated that Śrīnātha, the poet and Director of Public Instruction in the kingdom, composed it and, as it is bilingual, it shows Śrīnātha's ability as a poet both in Sanskrit and Telugu.

Not only is a portion of Sanskrit literature contained in Indian inscriptions, but passages from many of the known Sanskrit works are often quoted and thus help us in fixing the lower limit in the dates of composition of the works. Sometimes the works themselves are preserved by being engraved in letters of the century ; in such cases these lithic records are not only surviving copies of the work in question, but serve excellently in providing variant readings.

It was till recently believed that the Aihole inscription of Ravikīrti contained the earliest reference to Kālidāsa but there is as I have already pointed out (Sivaramamurti 3, p. 25) an earlier inscription, the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Maṅgaleśa, which gives a whole line यथाविधिहुताग्नीनां यथाकामार्चितार्थिनां (*Raghuvamśa* I, 6) from Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa* by cleverly dovetailing it as an epithet of the Cālukyas मानव्यसगोत्राणां हारीतीपुत्राणां अप्रतिहतोत्साहबल-मतिप्रतापशौर्यधैर्यवीर्याणां मातापितृपादानुध्यातानां यथाविधिहुताग्नीनां यथाकामार्चितार्थिनां अनेकधर्मकर्मपुण्यप्रसवानां चलिक्व्यानां. Similarly passages from the *Rāmāyaṇa* have been cleverly introduced in inscriptions and happily help us to show that at the time of the inscriptions they were present in the text of the book and were not later interpolations. The line नानागोत्रचरण-तपस्वाध्यायनिरतेभ्यः in the Maṭṭepād plates of Dāmodaravarman (*Epigraph. Ind.* XVII, p. 329) is clearly after तपस्वाध्यायनिरतं तपस्वी वाग्मिदां वरम् the opening verse of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In the Mahākūṭa inscription of Maṅgaleśa there is the line समुद्र इव गंभीरः क्षमया पृथिवीसमः (*Ind. Ant.* XIX, p. 17) following Vālmīki's lines समुद्र इव गाम्भीर्यं धैर्येण हिमवानिव ॥ कालाग्निसदृशः क्रोधे क्षमया पृथिवीसमः ॥ (*Rāmāyaṇa* I, 1, 17-18). Another line from the same inscription ज्येष्ठः श्रेष्ठगुणसमुदयोदितपुरुषणपराक्रमाङ्कप्रियः (*Ind. Ant.* XIX, p. 17) is after the line ज्येष्ठः श्रेष्ठगुणैर्युक्तं प्रियं दशरथः सुतम् (*Rāmāyaṇa* I, 1, 20). In the Satāra grant of the Eastern Cālukyan king Viṣṇuvardhana, nephew of Maṅgaleśa the lines तस्य पुत्रो महातेजाः कन्दर्प इव मूर्तिमान् । धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च पार्थतुल्यपराक्रमः (*Ind. Ant.* XIX, p. 309) are clearly after those in the *Rāmāyaṇa* रूपवान् सुभगः श्रीमान् कन्दर्प इव मूर्तिमान् and धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च सत्यवाक्यो दृढव्रतः (*Rāmāyaṇa* V, 34, 30 and I, 1, 2). Among the Pallava *Biruda* inscriptions of Narasimhavarman at Mahā-balipuram one on an ornamental pavilion of the Dharmarājaratha runs as सत्यपराक्रमः (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 4) after one of the epithets used by Vālmīki to describe Rāma दिव्यैर्गुणैः शक्रसमो रामः सत्यपराक्रमः (*Rāmāyaṇa* II, 2, 28). In Ravikīrti's Aihole inscription the line जलनिधिरिव व्योम व्योम्नः समोऽभवदम्बुधिः (*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, p. 6) has Vālmīki's गगनं गगनाकारं सागरः सगरोपमः ॥ रामरावणयोर्युद्धं रामरावणयोरिव । (*Rāmāyaṇa* VI, 110, 23-24) as its model. The phrase पर्जन्येन एकार्णवभूतायामिव पृथिव्यां कृतायां (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 42) in the Gīrnār inscription of Rudradāman clearly savours of the line in the *Rāmāyaṇa* अथ ह्युत्सहते क्रुद्धः कर्तुमेकार्णवं जगत् (*Rāmāyaṇa* V, 49, 20).

Verses and passages from other important poets have been utilized by poets composing inscriptions. I have elsewhere pointed out the indebtedness of poets composing royal charters to Kālidāsa. Among other poets is the pre-eminent Bāṇa. One of the invocatory verses of his *Kādambarī*

जयन्ति बाणासुरमौलिलालिताः दशास्यचूडामणिचक्रचुम्बिनः ।

सुरासुरापीशशिरान्तशायिनो भवच्छिदरस्यम्बरपादपांसवः ॥

(*Kādambarī* I, 2).

has been used as an invocatory verse in Mahārāja Kumārapāladeva's Rewah plates (*Ind. Ant.* XVII, pp. 230, 232). The opening verse of Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*

नमस्तुङ्गशिरश्चुम्बिचन्द्रचामरचारवे ।

त्रैलोक्यनगरारम्भमूलस्तम्भाय शम्भवे ॥

(*Harṣacarita* I, 1) begins many later Western Cālukyan inscriptions and is invariably used as the invocatory verse of Vijayanagara inscriptions.

Similarly, the third invocatory verse of the Rewah plates of Trailokyamalla Kalacuri (*Epigraph. Ind.* XXV, p. 5) is a copy of Daṇḍin's praise to Sarasvatī in his *Kāvyaḍarśa*

चतुर्मुखमुखाभोजवनहंसवधूर्मम ।

मानसे रमतां नित्यं सर्वशुक्ला सरस्वती ॥

(*Kāvyaḍarśa* I, 1).

The opening verse of the same plates

जयतु जयतु देवो देवकीनन्दनोऽयं जयतु जयतु कृष्णो वृष्णिवंशप्रदीपः ।

जयतु जयतु मेघश्यामलः कोमलाङ्गो जयतु जयतु पृथ्वीभारनाशो मुकुन्दः ॥

is from the *Mukundamālā Stotra* of Kulaśekhara where it occurs as the third verse. The opening verse of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।

जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

is repeated *in toto* in the invocatory verses of the Huli inscription of the Western Cālukyan king Vikramāditya VI (*Epigraph. Ind.* XVIII, p. 197). Similarly, the *Mangalaśloka* of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*

या सृष्टिः स्त्रष्टुराद्या वहति विधिहुतं या हविर्या च होत्री

ये द्वे कालं विधत्तः श्रुतिविषयगुणा या स्थिता व्याप्य विश्वम् ।

याभाहुः सर्वभूतप्रकृतिरिति यया प्राणिनः प्राणवन्तः

प्रत्यक्षाभिः प्रपन्नस्तनुभिस्वतु वस्ताभिरष्टाभिरीशः ॥

is an invocatory verse in an inscription from Rajputana (*Epigraph. Ind.* XI, p. 65). Clearly after the opening verse of the *Daśakumāracarita*

ब्रह्माण्डछत्रदण्डः शतधृतिभवनाम्भोरुहोनालदण्डः

क्षोणीनौकूपदण्डः क्षरदमरसरिपट्टिकाकेतुदण्डः ।

ज्योतिश्चक्राक्षदण्डास्त्रेभुवनविजयस्तम्भदण्डोद्धिदण्डः

श्रेयस्त्रैविक्रमस्ते वितरतु विबुधद्वेषिणां कालदण्डः ॥

is the invocatory verse of the Pathāri inscription of Parabala

त्रिभुवनभवनस्तम्भो नभस्थलाम्भोधिसेतुरधदहनः ।

ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलाम्बुजदण्डरुचिर्जयति हरिचरणः ॥

(*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 252).

The line नलिनीदलगतजलमतितरलम् from Śankarācārya's *Bhajagovinda stotra* occurring in the Sevadi plates of Cāhamāna Ratnapāla (*Epigraph. Ind.* XI, p. 310) is interesting both as proof of the genuineness of this important work and also as an index of the general influence of these inspiring writings.

The occurrence of the verse

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधके ।

शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरी नारायणि नमोस्तु ते

in the Dadhimatīmātā inscription of Druhlana (*Ibid.* XI, p. 299) is very important. It occurs in its complete form in the section called *Devīmāhātmya* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*. The latest date of the composition of the *Devīmāhātmya* is thus determined by the date of the inscription, the 7th century A.D.

Inscriptions like those from Swat giving Sanskrit renderings of verses from the Buddhist Pali texts (*Ibid.* IV, p. 135) only show as Bühler remarks that the Northern Buddhists had Sanskrit versions of several famous *gāthās* untraced in the *sūtras* of Nepal.

The occurrence of passages or even complete works in lithic records is illustrated by the inscription on the pillars of a Śūrya temple at Kāñcīpuram containing the *Śūryaśataka* of Mayūra in early Coḷa Grantha characters of about the 10th century A.D. One alone of these pillars has survived to proclaim the popularity of the work within three centuries of its composition in so southerly a part of this vast land with the then difficulties of communication which however were no barrier against the travel of literary works and appreciation of literary beauty¹. In the collation of different manuscripts and the use of the earliest copies for determining correct readings, this is probably most useful.

The other example of a complete work occurring only as a lithic record is very valuable as the only surviving text when all other copies on perishable material are lost. An example is supplied by the *Pārijātamañjarī nāṭikā* by Madana discovered at Dhārā, in the original *Rhoj-sālā*, now turned into mosque (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 96) and rescued from one of its walls. Along with this were discovered two Prakṛt poems attributed to king Bhoja and

¹ Even this one has suffered at the hands of ignorant temple renovators and split into bits it has served as building material part of which being irretrievably lost inside construction the remaining part has been rescued and preserved as a valuable treasure in the Madras Government Museum (Pl. IX-b).

eulogising the tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu (Ibid. VIII, p. 241). As Bhoja is reputed as a great patron of letters this discovery is of interest. It shows at the same time how the text of works engraved on stone and fixed in the walls of the great University established by Bhoja at Dhārā supplied easy reference books for the students.

Though the earliest Sanskrit inscriptions are definitely later by many centuries than the literary works themselves, the inscriptions alone supply the earliest literary writings in the most ancient regional languages of the country like Tamil, Telugu and Canarese. The earliest Tamil works are dated round about the Christian era and their real antiquity is lost in a dark period of literary history ; but the discovery of peculiarly written Brahmi inscriptions in the numerous caves of the Tamil districts and their able decipherment by K. V. Subramanya Aiyar has proved that the earliest written records in Tamil can be traced back to the third century B.C., and are contemporary with any of the other oldest records in India. Similarly, literary works in Telugu date from about the 10th - 11th centuries A.D. and all earlier poetical efforts in the language should be traced to inscriptions. The local origin of metres like *Akkara*, the predilection for the use of such metres as *Taruvoju* which are later discarded, special early forms of using the *anusvāra*, etc., and the beginnings of Telugu poetry established in the early Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions, may be so traced.

The literary value of the inscriptions is clear from the language and ideas in the *praśastis*. In the earliest example of a pure Sanskrit inscription, Rudradāman's *praśasti* at Girnar, the language is really charming. As already pointed out, in some places there is an unconscious lisp and repetition of expressions of the *Ādikavi* Vālmiki. Both *Śabdālamkāra* and *Arthālamkāra* are present but it is the former that predominates. The sweet play of soft words and syllables is beautifully expressed in the works of Kālidāsa where they abound. The *anuprāsas* and *yamakas* in Kālidāsa are very sweet. His language abounds in such expressions as ततो मृगेन्द्रस्य मृगेन्द्रगामी वधाय वध्यस्य शरं शरण्यः (*Raghuvamśa* II, 30), बालामबालेन्दुमुखीं वभाषे (Ibid. VI, 53), इन्दुं नवोत्थानमिवेन्दुमत्तै (Ibid. VI, 31), असौ शरण्यः शरणोन्मुखानां (Ibid. VI, 21), अथ प्रदोषे दोषज्ञः संवेशाय विशापतिम् । सूनुः सूनृतवाक्स्पष्टः विससर्जोर्जितश्रियम् ॥ (Ibid. I, 95) पप्रच्छ कुशलं राज्ञे राज्याश्रममुनिं मुनिः (Ibid. I, 58), कुलप्रदीपो नृपतिर्दिलीपः (Ibid. VI, 74), पप्रच्छ भद्रं विजितारिभद्रः (Ibid. XIV, 31), इति रामो वृषस्यन्तीं वृषस्कन्धः शशास ताम् (Ibid. XII, 34), कृच्छ्रलब्धमपि लब्धवर्णभाक् (Ibid. XI, 2), सप्तसामोपगीतं त्वां सप्तार्णवजलेशयम् । सप्तार्चिर्मुखमाचख्युः सप्तलोकैकसंश्रयम् ॥ (Ibid. X, 21), अहीनगुर्नाम स गां समग्रामहीनबाहुद्रविणः शशास । (Ibid. XVIII, p. 14). As example of the *yamakas* we have all the verses of the 9th Canto of the *Raghuvamśa*, besides others. Such examples in this inscription are to be seen in passages like गुरुभिरभ्यस्तनाम्नो रुद्रदाम्नो (l. 4), अभिवेषानां यौधेयानां (l. 12), हस्तोद्धितार्जितोर्जित (l. 13), दानमानावमान (l. 14), महाक्षत्पनान्ना . . . प्रतापदान्ना रुद्रदाम्ना etc. Examples like this occur in other inscriptions, as for instance, the lines सुतः प्रसूतो यज्ञसां प्रसूतिः, धर्मेतो धर्मदोषः, कृत इव कृतमेतत् in the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman and समवतु वसुधारा धर्मेपीयूषधारा in the Sārṇāth inscription of Kumāradevi (*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 323).

Combining a tendency of echo with *anuprāsa* runs the line कारिता शला श्रीविशाला (Ibid. IV, p. 60) which reminds us of Kālidāsa's श्रीविशालं विशालाम् in the *Meghadūta*. The line in the Pahoa *prasaṣṭi* of Mahendrapāla सरलितप्रचुरालकजालकाः (Ibid. I, p. 246) is an excellent example recalling similar *yamaka* in the verses of the 9th Canto of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*. The composition of the Kāngrā Jwālāmukhi *prasaṣṭi* composed by Rāghavacaitanya, a poet often quoted reverentially in the *Śārṅgadharapaddhati* is one string of *anuprāsa*s in which it abounds (Ibid. I, p. 192). *Chekānuprāsa* is illustrated in lines like चक्रे कृती सुमनसां मनसामकस्मादस्मादकालकलिकालविरामशंकां in Khajurāho inscription II (Ibid. I, p. 129). *Vṛtyanuprāsa* has such examples as

मौलाविन्दुधरः फणाधरधरः स्कन्धे भवानीधरो

वामे कामधरः प्रणामनिरते गङ्गाधरो मूर्धनि ।

मूर्तौ धूलिधरो गले गरधरः केशेषु वेणीधरः

पाणौ शूलधरो हरः पुरहरः पुष्पातु वो मङ्गलम् ॥

in the Kaśākudī plates of Nandivarman (*S. Ind. Inscr.* II, p. 346) or

वरगद्वेतालवर्गं वृद्धितनिजशिरोधारिधावत्कबन्ध-

ण्डात्कुर्वद्वाकिडिम्बं मुखविलविलसत्सम्मुखोत्कामुखोत्कं ।

मांसग्रासाभिलाषस्वनदशिवाशिवाभैरवारान्नरौद्रं

रौद्रं यो धाम विभ्रत्प्रतिसमरमिति द्वेषिचक्रचकार ॥

of the Bilhari inscription (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 256). Fine examples of *Lātānuprāsa* are given in the Pathāri inscription of Parabala

अहिमकरचक्रकुवलयविलसत्कमललयः सदानवकायः ।

जलनिधिरिव हरिवतात्पुराणपुरुषोऽपि यः सदा नवकायः ॥

शकलीकृतसर्वाङ्गा नानाभरणभूषिताः ।

दृश्यन्ते रिपवो यस्य नानाभरणभूषिताः ॥

(Ibid. IX, p. 252, 253). Kielhorn's remarks about the poetry of this inscription are particularly interesting in the light of the value he has attached to the piece and the pains he has taken in reconstructing the text of Harṣa, the author of the *prasaṣṭi*. All the type of *anuprāsa*s and *yamakas* are found in inscriptional literature. An example of *Vakrokti* is found in the verse

कस्त्वं द्वारि दिगम्बरः क्षणकः कस्मादकस्मादहो

वाके शूलधरो धिगायुधविधिं बर्हास्त्वदर्हा ननु ।

मां जानीहि महेश्वरं स्फुटभिदं वस्त्रेप्यभावादिति
प्रेयस्या परिहासतो विहसितं शम्भोः शुभायास्तु वः ॥

of the Khajurāho inscriptions IV composed by Rāma (Ibid. I, p. 140).

As for the *arthālankāra* variety the examples are as varied and interesting. A few samples will suffice. *Upamā* of the *dharmopameyalupta* type may be seen in the verse

अब्धौ मुक्तायमाना शिरसि हिमगिरेरभ्रगङ्गायमाना
व्योम्नि ज्योत्स्नायमाना दिशि दिशि करिणां कुम्भमालायमाना ।
उच्चैर्देवालयानामुपरि सितपताकायमाना यदीया
कीर्तिभ्रान्ता समन्तादनुनादि पुलिने राजहंसीयमाना ॥

of the Dewal *praśasti* of Lalla (Ibid. I, p. 79). *Rūpaka* illustrated in verses like

दिक्सुन्दरीवदनचान्दनपत्रभङ्गलीलायमानघनविस्तृतकान्तकीर्त्तेः ।
श्रीराष्ट्रकूटकुलशैलमलङ्कारिणोस्तस्मादभून्निरुपमो निरवद्यशौर्यः ॥

from the pen of Trivikrama, the famous author of the *Nalacampū*, in a Rāṣṭrakūṭa record of Indrarāja (Ibid. IX, p. 30), or

हेरम्बस्य विकल्पदन्तमुकुलं गौरीरहस्योत्सवप्रत्यासन्नाविलासदीपकलिका गङ्गामृणालाङ्कुरः ।
देवस्य त्रिपुरद्रुहो विजायिना पुष्पेषुणा मस्तके विन्यस्ताङ्कुशविभ्रमा विजयते चूडासुधांशोः
कला ॥

in the Cebrolu inscription of Jaya (Ibid. V, p. 142). *Utprekṣā* is illustrated in verses like

यदध्वरोल्लासिहुताशधूमलेखाः स्फुटानेकविभङ्गिभाजः ।
दिगङ्गनापीनपयोधरेषु विलासवेणीश्रियमाश्रयन्ति ॥

from the Baṭeśvar inscription of Paramardideva (Ibid. I, p. 210). The opening verse of Rājendracola's Tiruvālangāḍu plates

स्वस्ति श्रीकण्ठकण्ठाभरणभुजगराट्मूर्ध्नि माणिक्यमध्ये
दृष्ट्वात्मीयां सलज्जा प्रतिकृतिमपरामङ्गनां शङ्कमाना ।
आश्लेषालोलचित्तं कृतचरणनतिप्रार्थनं वो भवानी
दिश्यात्पश्यन्त्यधीरं निजपतिमनिशं सेर्ष्यमर्धेक्षणेन ॥

(S. Ind. Inscr. III, p. 393), and the verse

आम्यन्तीनां बनान्ते यदरिमृगदृशां हारमुक्ताफलानि
छिन्नाकीर्णानि भूमौ नयनजलमिलत्कज्जलैर्लाञ्छितानि ।

यत्नाच्चिन्वन्ति दर्भक्षतचरणतलासृग्विलिप्तानि गुञ्जा-

स्त्रभूषारम्यरामास्तनकलशघनाश्लेषलोलाः पुलिन्दाः ॥

from the Naihati inscription of Vallālasena (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIV, p. 160) are examples of *Bhrāntimat*. *Smarāṇa* is illustrated in another, a pathetic verse from the same inscription of Vallālasena

यस्यारिराजशिशवः शवरालयेषु वालैरलीकनरनाथपदेऽभिषिक्ताः ।

दृप्ताः प्रमोदतरलेक्षणया जनन्या निश्चस्य वत्सलतया समयं निषिद्धाः ॥

(Ibid. XIV, p. 160), and another

उद्यद्दीप्तिरत्नजालजटिलं व्याकुष्टमीढग्धनुः

क्रुद्धेनोपरि वैरिवीरशिरसापेवं विमुक्ताः शराः ।

धारासारिणि सेन्द्रचापबलये यस्येत्थमब्दागमे

गर्जद्गर्जरसंगरव्यतिकरं जीर्णो जनः शंसति ॥

by the poet Trivikrama in the Rāṭrakūṭa record mentioned above (Ibid. IX, p. 31). *Ullekha* has a good example in a verse of Nṛsimha, the poet of the 12th century Sihola stone inscription of Kārṇarāja

कन्दर्पबाणगणशाणशिलामनोज्ञो दिक्कामिनीवदनदर्पणमण्डलश्रीः ।

देवः शशी विजयतेऽत्रितपःपयोभिमुक्ताफलं हरशिरोमुकुटैकरत्नम् ॥

(Ibid. IX, p. 185) and in the verse from the famous Pallava temple of Kailāsanātha from Kañcīpuram

कलाचतुरयोषितां रहसि रञ्जने मन्मथस्त्रयीपथनिषेविणां सततपालने वासवः ।

मुनिद्विजसुराद्विषां हृदयदारणे माधवः स च द्रविणसंपदा सुजनतोषणे वित्तदः ॥

(*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 12). *Samāsokti* is illustrated in another verse of Trivikrama

कृत्वास्पदं हृदयहारि जघन्यभागे स्वैरं पुनर्मृदु विमर्द्य च मध्यदेशम् ।

यस्यासमस्य समरे वसुधाङ्गनायाः काञ्चीपदे पदमकारि करेण भूयः ॥

(*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 30). The verse

भरत इव सर्वदमनः सगर इव कृतात्मजसत्यागः ।

कर्ण इव पुष्कलाङ्गो यः प्रियकाव्यो ययातिरिव ॥

from the Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 148) is an example of *Śleṣa*, as also the line

व्यपगतविषयस्नेहो हततिमिरदशः प्रदीपबदसङ्गः

from the Bodh-Gaya inscription of Mahānāman (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 276) ; and more examples may be seen in verses like

यशोदानन्दभाक्चक्रे पूतनामा रणक्रियाम् ।
जातो वृष्णिकुले कं स रिपोः च्छेत्ता नरोत्तमः ॥
गांधारीं भजता प्रहृष्टशकुनिस्त्वानप्रियां प्रेयसी
भीष्मद्रोणवचांस्यकर्णसुखदान्याकर्ण्य समूच्छेता ।
नो धर्मप्रभवं विरोधितवता प्राप्यापि वंशक्षयं
संप्राप्ता धृतराष्ट्रत सुसुहृदा विद्वेषिणेत्यङ्कतम् ॥

from the Khajurāho inscription (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 145, 143) and

पीताम्बरं यस्य यशो बभूव सुदर्शनं यस्य वपुर्विजज्ञे ।
गुणोत्करो यस्य च नन्दकोऽभूदासीत्स तस्मात्पुरुषोत्तमाख्यः ॥

from the Baṭesvar inscription (*Ibid.* I, p. 211). In the verse of the Masulipatam plates of Vijayāditya III

यस्मिन्नारूढदन्तिन्यरिकुलमधिसंरोहति क्षमाभृदग्रं
यद्वाहावात्तखड्गे रिपुयुवतिकरा गृह्यते चामराणि ।
आबद्धायां अकुट्यां मधु रिपुभवने यस्य बध्नन्ति मृङ्गा
यद्धामन्याजिभेरीध्वननमनु शिवाश्शत्रुधात्रि ध्वनन्ति ॥

(*Ibid.* V, p. 124) there is an example of *Sahokti* of which another illustration may be seen in

नामैव यस्य रमणाङ्गविवर्तिनीनां रोमश्चवेपथुभृतामारिसुन्दरीणाम् ।
अश्रूणि बाहुवलयानि मनांसि सद्यः संत्रासवेगविधुराणि समं निपेतुः ॥

in the Bhandak plates of Kṛṣṇa I (*Ibid.* XIV, p. 124). *Virodha* and *Virodhābhāsa* are respectively illustrated in verses

दारिद्र्यं हरतार्थिनो रिपुजनाल्लक्ष्मी मनो योषितो
रूपं पञ्चशरादगाधपयसो गांभीर्यमम्भेनिधेः ।
चित्रं येन विचारचारुमनसामाचारमातन्वता
सर्वत्रैव जनापवादराहितं चौर्यं प्रकाशकृतम् ॥

and

धनदोऽपि न प्रमत्तो ध्वस्तसमस्तसविषोऽपि न विरूपः ।

रत्नाकरोऽपि न जडो यो नाशोकोऽपि रागिष्ठः ॥

from an inscription in the Vaillabhāṭṭasvāmi temple in Gwalior (Ibid. I, p. 156). A verse of Umāpatidhara from the famous Deopara prasasti gives an example of *Adhika* in the verse

उच्चित्राणि दिगम्बरस्य वसनान्यर्धाङ्गनास्वामिनो

रत्नालङ्कृतिभिर्विशोषितवपुःशोभाः शतं सुभ्रुवः ।

पौराद्याश्च पुरीः स्मशानवसतेर्भिक्षामुजोप्यक्षयां

लक्ष्मीं स व्यतनोदरिद्रभरणे सुज्ञो हि सेनान्वयः ॥

(Ibid. I, p. 310). *Yathāsamkhyā* mixed up with *Upamā* is found in the verse

चरुत्पताकान्यबलासनाथान्यत्यर्थशुक्लान्यधिकोन्नतानि ।

तद्विलताचित्रसिताभ्रकूटतुल्योपमानानि गृहाणि यत्र ॥

of the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 81). As an example of *Vyājastuti* are the lines from the Nagarjuni cave inscription of Anantavarman Maukhari

जासीत्सर्वमहीक्षितां मयुरिव क्षत्रस्थितेर्देशिकः श्रीमान्मत्तगजेन्द्रखेलगमनः श्रियज्ञवर्मा नृपः ।

यस्याहूतसहस्रनेत्रविरहक्षामा सदैवाध्वरैः पौलोमी चिरमश्रुपातमलिनं घत्ते कपोलश्रियम् ॥

(Ibid. p. 224).

So far *padya* (verse) has been considered ; *gadya* (prose), however, has always been held by the Sanskrit poet as the touch-stone for judging poetic ability. In all Sanskrit literature none can equal Bāṇa in his majestic flow of language, rhythm in the construction of sentences and dazzle in the meanings and suggestions that appear on the surface and peep from deeper recess. The most typical models of noble Sanskrit prose composition are the passages in his *Harṣacarita* where the unbridled flame of intellectual youth is evident. The *Kādambarī* which abounds in equally fine passages shows the poet mellow and moderate in his expressions with experience and age. As Bhāsa is styled as smile incarnate (*hāsa*) and Kālidāsa as sport (*vilāsa*), similarly Bāṇa is passion incarnate (*Pañcabāṇa*). Bāṇa has been the model for all prose compositions and in the lines

सोयं नरपतिमकुटमकरिकामरकतप्रभापटलपल्लवितपादपीठो गजपतिगलगर्जित-

प्रलयपञ्चाननस्त्रिशङ्कुपतिकपटपाटनक्रकचपातश्रुपलपञ्चालचूलचुम्बनचणचन्द्रहातो गिरिपतिपिञ्जुपिण्डचण्ड

मारुतः कवलितकलिकालकपटपिटको निर्वाणपाथिकलोपाकदर्शनसमाधिगतसकलदर्शनस्वरसपेशलज्ञान-
संपद्भिजितमुनिमनोवृत्तिराश्रयः श्रेयसामाकरः सर्वविद्यानामालयः कलानामाधारः स्वामिसम्पदां
परमभट्टारकमहाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरपरममहेश्वरनिजभुजोपार्जितश्रीकन्यकुब्जाधिपत्यश्रीमच्चन्द्रादित्यदेवो
विजयी ॥

in Candradeva's plates (Ibid. XIV, pp. 193-195) the echo of Bāṇa's language is obvious.
The descriptive epithets in the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman

कलियुगपराक्रमाकालितविग्रहस्य समुच्छ्रास इव भगवतो धर्मस्याधिष्ठानमास्पदं गुणानां निधिः
प्रणयिनामुपघ्नः संव्रस्तानां श्रीसम्पदामायतनं । (Ibid. XIX, p. 118).

are clearly contemporary imitation of the great court poet of the paramount sovereign of
the time.

Sometimes there are also examples of didactic poetry. In the Sarangarh plates the verse

यौवनं विविधैर्भोगैर्मध्यमं च वयः श्रिया ।

बुद्धभावश्च धर्मेण यस्य याति स पुण्यवान् ॥

(Ibid. IX, p. 280) suggests the equal allocation of time in ones life to the *puruṣārthas* namely
dharma, *artha* and *kāma*. Kālidāsa's

वयोरूपविभूतीनामेकैकं मदकारणम् ।

तानि तस्मिन्समस्तानि न तस्योत्तिषिचे मनः ॥ (*Raghuvamśa*, XVII, 43.)

and Bāṇa's

गर्भेश्वरत्वमाभिनवयौवनत्वमप्रतिमरूपत्वममानुषशक्तित्वं चेति महतीयं स्वस्वनर्थपरम्परा
सर्वा । भविनयानायेकैकमप्येषामायतनं, किमुत समवायः ॥

(*Kādambarī*, p. 196).

have strange inscriptional echo in the verse

शौर्यं श्रीयौवनं राज्यमेकैकं मदकारकम् ।

सर्वं श्रीमानमीतस्य निर्विकारमुपस्थितम् ॥

from the Kōṇḍēḍḍa plates of Dharmarāja (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIX, p. 269).

As already pointed out most verses of Kākusthavarman's Tālaguṇḍa inscription are
very interesting as they are composed in a metre rarely found elsewhere. Similarly, in the
Addanki inscription of Paṇḍaranga the metre is special and proves its occurrence in very
early Telugu.

INFLUENCE OF INDIAN EPIGRAPHY ABROAD.

The key note of Indian civilization lies in its one basic culture that permeated the whole land, geographically divided by long rivers and large mountains but culturally knit by a constant unifying factor of common faith and ideals underlying the apparent diversity. In India two thousand years ago when communications were more difficult than now the bonds of this affinity were closer. The emphasis on differences is a later factor. The barrier of river and mountain was not so great as the barrier of conflicting dynasties. Aśoka by combining under his sceptre the whole of the land greatly overcame these barriers but his successors like the Śungas, Sātavāhanas and Kalingas slightly undid his work by the very division of the country into fragments. The great Gupta emperors succeeded once again in establishing a well-knit empire. If we find the grace of Gupta sculpture at distant Elephanta in Western India or Ajanṭa in the Deccan, it is because the Maitrakas of Valabhi ruled as *Sāmantas* of the Guptas in Western India and the Vākāṭakas were close kinsmen under the direct cultural and political influence of the Gupta emperors. The script of the Guptas not only influenced palaeographic development in Western India and the Deccan but it even spread to the distant dominions of the Kadambas and Pallavas and accounts for the false box-head occurring in the letters of early Kādamba and Pallava inscriptions of the 5th century A.D. On the other hand, local influence has also been at work and if the script of Aśoka's edicts differs in areas, or the script of the Guptas shows variations in different localities it is due to such influences. Mediæval sculpture is different from the Gupta or early sculpture of the same area, and with the tendency for local development, local variations developed from the mediaeval period with sharper contrast with the efflux of time. The shade of the single umbrella of a single king being eliminated, different and numerous parasols produced a chequered effect of light and shade; and so the complex schools of Indian culture. But the underlying vein was however the same. This unifying factor of Indian culture has spread beyond the mainland and widened the sphere of cultural bond. In distant Java as in Cambodia, Annam and other parts of South-eastern Asia, Indian culture from the mainland has ingrained itself in the soil and has made possible the rise of such monuments as the stūpa of Borobodur, the Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at the Śiva temple at Prambanam and the great monuments at Ankor Thom decorated with Nāga and Garuḍa motifs. The earlier figures from Java with all the grace of Gupta and Pallava sculpture and the late mediaeval carvings of Cambodian art suggesting affinities to the picturesque shadow figures of the *Wayang*, show the persistence of a great culture. This cultural conquest of South-eastern Asia more than the colonization and the effects of the brilliant conquests of the Coḷa emperor Rājendra has survived. The discovery of bronzes at Negapatam showing Javanese influence in the case of some and that of the copper plate of Dharmapāla at Nālanda point only to the cultural comradeship of the empires in India and Java.

See Pl. I which illustrates this chapter.

The sand-buried manuscripts and documents of Central Asia and Tibet, recovered by Stein, are in a script which is surprisingly similar to the late Gupta script. Tibetan script has remained the same after the lapse of nearly a thousand years and more.

In Burma the script used in the 5th century A.D. in the Maunggun plates resembles closely the Śāṅkāyana script which was in vogue in the Krishna valley a little earlier. A couple of centuries later a further development in the script used there is recorded in the Pyu inscriptions. The modern script in Burma is a development from this script, though a thousand years and more have brought about infinite changes here as in the scripts in the mainland of India. Here may be observed affinities with Grantha-Tamīl in some cases. The peculiar case of medial *e* wherein the letter from the Grantha-Tamīl is substituted for the full vowel in modern Burmese script is an instance in point.

In Ceylon the early script used in the 3rd century B.C. was quite akin to the contemporary script in India in the inscriptions in the caves in Tinnevely, Madura, Trichinopoly, etc. In the 2nd century A.D. the development is similar to that in the Krishna valley and in the inscriptions from Maharatmale the letters are exactly like the contemporary ones at Amaravati. It may here be recalled that some sculptures similar to the carvings of Amaravati have been discovered in Ceylon and the moon-stones with the beautiful decorations of rows of geese, elephants, etc., occurring in Nāgārjunakoṇḍa are clearly borrowed from Ceylon. The inscriptions from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa indicate that there was cultural and religious contact between this part of the Andhra country and Ceylon. Later, during the time of Narasimhavarman Pallava, the contemporary king of Ceylon who was his friend was restored to his throne by the help of the navy of the mighty Pallava monarch. The picturesque description of the great fleet and the royal ship given in the Ceylonese Chronicle *Mahāvamsa* is easily visualised by a look at the two types of large ships from the magnificent panels from Borobodur, as the types occurring at Java represent similar ones from South India about the time. In the Ceylonese inscriptions of the 10th century A.D. the Grantha type is similar to that obtaining in South India at the time. The influence of both Grantha and Vaṭṭeḷuttu can be seen in the script used. This is not only due to geographical proximity, but also to the frequent conquest of the island by the kings of South India, specially the great Coḷa emperors Rājarāja and Rājendra. In the modern script of Ceylon the peculiar slanting types of *ta* and *na* in the inscriptions in Vaṭṭeḷuttu are significant. Here, as in Malabar, the script has not materially changed since the mediæval period.

In Cambodia and Annam the evolution of the script has been similar. In the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. the script is very similar to that in contemporary India. In the 4th and 5th centuries, though there is a further development, the earlier type is still preserved. In the 8th century the script changes and approximates to the script in Vengi or in the Andhra area and thereafter the further development in the 10th century shows the influence of the Pallava script and even later Tamīl script. Here the letter *ka* tends to shape

itself like the letter *ka* in Tamil. *ṣa* is shaped after the Canarese and Telugu type. *Ca* is similarly formed. *Ya* tends more towards the Telugu-Canarese variety. In all these cases a peculiar box-head shaped or semi-circular head added to each letter distinguishes it, like the serif in contemporary South Indian letters.

An inscribed slab from Malaya, mentioning Budhagupta, a *Mahānāvika*, captain of a ship, shows the occurrence of a similar script in Malaya also. The inscription is of about the 5th century A.D., judging from its palæographic features. The place mentioned in this inscription, Raktamṛttikā, is identified with Rangmati in Bengal and the close similarity of these letters with the southern variety in the Krishna area about the time proclaims the unity of culture.

The discovery of the interesting *Yūpa* inscriptions of Mūlavarman in Kutei in Borneo apart from proving clearly a highly vigorous Brahmanical faith and powerful Hindu rule in distant islands shows the cultural affinity, a clear evidence of which is supplied by the clear similarity between South Indian Pallava script of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. and the script of these inscriptions.

In the inscriptions of Pūrṇavarman from Java we can see clearly the palæography of Pallava script of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. The numerous Sanskrit inscriptions found in these distant islands show the extent to which Indian culture penetrated, which is also testified by the sculpture and architecture in these places.

The deep-rooted nature of this culture can be understood, when we remember that even in Java to-day where the religion has changed, the *Wayang* plays yet immortalise the Hindu story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, though the troupe that conducts it and the audience that appreciates it is mostly Muhammadan.

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND SOUTH INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION.

The earliest inscriptions in India of which the edicts of Aśoka are the most famous are in Prakrit. The earliest Sanskrit inscriptions come much later. The Girnar inscription of Rudaradāman is a very early example of an inscription in Sanskrit. So also is the inscription of Uṣavadāta, the son-in-law of Nahapāna, from the Nāsik cave. The earlier tendency has always been to record the official documents in Prakrit. That is not to say that Sanskrit did not enjoy a great official position in the royal court ; for Patañjali, the great grammarian, was amongst the most noteworthy persons of his time having great influence with Puṣyamitra, the Śunga king, whom he helped in the performance of the Aśvamedha. Correct spelling, pronunciation and usage were everything for this great grammarian and the language was looked on as the heavenly cow. It was not without any basis or support that this position was claimed for this supreme language of languages which has been described later by Bhavabhūti as the language of the gods revealed to the world by great sages

संस्कृतं नाम दैवी वागन्वाख्याता महर्षिभिः

Still the language understood by the people was Prakrit rather than Sanskrit. In the *Nāṭakas*, the king, the priests, the *Rṣis*, and the learned speak Sanskrit ; the queen and all the other common folk speak Prakrit. The language spoken and understood by the majority was Prakrit and this was chosen for the inscriptions.

Slowly, however, Sanskrit came to displace Prakrit in the inscriptions. It became a fashion to use Sanskrit more and more ; and though in the initial stages the language was generally simple, as we find in the earliest inscriptions of the Pallavas soon after the change from Prakrit to Sanskrit, still as the years advanced we can see the change in those very Pallava inscriptions of a later date, as for instance in the Kaśākuḍi plates or the Taṇḍam-tōṭṭam plates. Some of the long *praśastis*, as for instance the Mau inscription of Madanavarman, the Dewal *praśasti* of Lalla, the Khajuraho inscriptions, the Baṭeśvar inscription of Paramardideva, the inscription of Parabala, the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena, the Cebrolu inscription of Jaya, the Svapneśvar inscription from Bhuvaneśvar, the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman, and the *praśasti* of Yaśodharman, are splendid examples of what is described by Keith and others as artificial poetry. This, however, is not a fair way of describing this type of composition simply because the language is more complex, giving us samples of other literary *pākas* and not *drākṣā pāka* in which Vālmīki and Kālidāsa were adepts. As has been already pointed out there is no *rīti* or *pāka* which is absent in this branch of literature, nor is there any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the composers of the *praśastis* to introduce a great variety of *śabda* and *arthālankāras* at their disposal. Often the model of earlier classical poets has been before them and the rich contribution of the composers of the *praśastis* has greatly added to the wealth of Sanskrit literature. It only remains for the students of Sanskrit to study these inscriptions as specimens of literature. A step in the right direction has been taken by the Nirnayasagara Press, Bombay, in publishing the two volumes of *Prācīnalekhamālā* which unfortunately has not met with any great encouragement, and as the inscriptional literature now available in printed form is quite vast, it behoves all those interested in Sanskrit learning to make it a part of the study of Sanskrit literature.

The greatest bond in this vast sub-continent has been our cultural unity. If the pilgrim of North India craves for a dip in the *Sangama* or the confluence of Ratnākara and Mahodadhi (Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea), the South Indian equally yearns for a bath in the holy stream of the Gangā or the confluence of the three rivers at Prayāga, Allahabad. Jagan-nāthapuri, Puskar, and Dvārakā are places of similar importance. In ancient days students travelled to distant universities at Taxilā, Banaras, Nālandā and Kañci. Great philosophers like Śankara established centres of learning for the dissemination of knowledge all over the land and Śankara went all the way to meet Kumarilabhaṭṭa in distant Bihar. Rājendra

Cola brought great Śaivite teachers from the banks of the Gangā and established them in his capital. The Pallavas encouraged families versed in Vedic lore to migrate from the Narmadā to their own kingdom and the survivals in the names *Aṣṭasahasra*, *Bṛhadcaraṇa* and *Vaḍama* are significant. The Kāśmīri poet Bilhaṇa was patronised by the Cāḷukyan king, Vikramāditya VI. The *Kulīnas* were imported into Bengal from Kanauj. But the greatest bond was due to the influences of *Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Itihāsa*. If the *Veda* and the *Purāṇa* appeared like an overlord or a friend respectively in the voice of their mandates, *Kāvya* came in with greater appeal like the sportive voice of the beloved one. It should here be remembered that the language of the *Veda* is quite different from the Classical and even that of the *Purāṇa* is archaic. It is the language of the *Kāvyas* that has the greatest appeal and it is this that has enjoyed the position of the language of the court. Any court anywhere in India had only this ; and there was no geographical barrier or linguistic for a scholar in that language anywhere in the land, and India abounded in Sanskritic scholarship. Whether Jagannātha wrote from Delhi or whether Appayya Dīkṣita wrote from Viriñcipuram, the students and scholars who read and appreciated their works hailed from all over the land. The State language of India was Sanskrit. It was pure Sanskrit in all the inscriptions of North India whether of the Guptas, or the mediaeval dynasties like the Vardhanas, Maukharis, Pratihāras, Paramāras, Candellas, Pālas, Senas, Gāhaḍavālas, Haihayas, Gangas, in short, of any Northern dynasty. The Southern dynasties had also Sanskrit as the principal official language and almost all the grants are completely or nearly so in Sanskrit. The script used in all North Indian inscriptions is Nagari in one form or other, though the form differs in different geographical areas. In South India and the Deccan not only is the script different in different areas but also the regional language used for inscriptions alongside of Sanskrit. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions are mostly in Nagari characters and in the Sanskrit language though sometimes they are in Canarese-Telugu script, the language being either Sanskrit or Canarese or a jumble of both. Similarly in the Eastern Ganga inscriptions the script used is sometimes Nagari and mostly the Canarese-Telugu type. In the inscriptions from the Tamil area both Grantha and Tamil scripts are used, the former for Sanskrit and the latter for the Tamil portion of the inscription. In the Telugu area similarly Telugu-Canarese script is used for both the Sanskrit and Telugu portions of the inscriptions.

All inscriptions in languages other than Sanskrit are in the regional languages. They belong to the mediaeval period and are restricted to the Southern part of the land. Though the earliest Tamil inscriptions are contemporary with the earliest Prakrit inscriptions, pure Tamil inscriptions occur again only in the 7th Century A.D., as for instance, in the Kūram grant. This absence of Tamil inscriptions for about eight centuries cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, as even the earliest Pāṇḍyan inscriptions are only early mediaeval.

The three important South Indian languages, Tamil, Canarese and Telugu, are the only regional languages used in inscriptions in India, barring Prakrit used in early inscriptions

Though it may appear rather surprising, the fact remains that we have inscriptions practically in no other regional language. The presence of numerous inscriptions in these three languages does not however mean the non-prevalence of Sanskrit in these areas ; on the other hand Sanskrit was given the first place as the accepted court language. But while in North India the kings used the official language Sanskrit for the inscriptions, in South India the regional languages were greatly favoured together with Sanskrit. The great and numerous *Meykīrtis* or eulogies of royal dynasties in Tamil which supply most of the material for the history of the Coḷa and Pāṇḍya dynasties are patterns of composition in themselves. Tamil Pallava inscriptions like Dantivarman's Tiruvaḷḷarai inscription are contributions to Tamil literature. The terms used in special senses in these Tamil inscriptions are so numerous, the vocabulary is so rich, the expression so elegant, and the diction so dignified that Tamil literature has been greatly enriched by this inscriptional literature. There is practically no pillar or wall of a temple, specially the plinth of a Coḷa temple—South India teems with temples of immense proportions distributed on the average of one for every mile or two, specially in the Tanjore district—which has not lengthy inscriptions on the exploits of the king or his numerous gifts or institutions he established. Indeed, the beautiful descriptions of royal exploits, rich in rhythm and colour of language, vie only with the greatness of the exploits themselves. The Coḷas and the Pāṇḍyas were among the greatest patrons of Tamil literature. And the great composers of the *Tevāram* Appar and Sambandar, were contemporaries of the Pallavas who greatly honoured them. It is interesting to note that not only the opening verse of the great *Tiruvācakam* of Maṇikyavācaka is inscribed on the palm-leaf shown in the hand of the bronze figure of the saint from Madukkūr, Tanjore district discovered nearly two decades ago as Treasure Trove by the Madras Government and returned to the villagers for worship, but also some of the hymns including a few rare ones are found inscribed on the walls of the temple at Tiruvaḍavāyil, Tanjore district in Coḷa characters of the 12th Century A.D.

The earliest Telugu works like the *Mahābhārata* are rather late, as Nannayabhaṭṭa, the father of Telugu poetry, is of the 11th century. But Nannecoḍa, the author of *Kumārasambhava* in Telugu, is a century earlier. The famous Yuddhamalla inscription from Bezvada in Telugu poetry is in the script of the 10th century A.D. Earlier still is the inscription describing the exploits of the Eastern Cālukyan general Paṇḍaranga which is of the 9th century A.D. On the back of a monolithic Dvārapālaka, an excellent example of an early Eastern Cālukyan work which I brought a few years ago from Bezvada to the Madras Museum, an inscription was found reading *Vegināthu velaṇḍu*, meaning “servant of the lord of Vegi” in letters of the 7th century A.D. This is a very early instance of the use of Telugu in inscriptions. In an inscription a portion of which is in Telugu, the poet Śrīnātha, the doyen of Telugu literature, is described as the composer of the inscription and his official position as the Director of Public Instruction in the Reḍḍi kingdom is also mentioned. The Eastern Cālukyan, Reḍḍi and Vijayanagara kings were great patrons of

Telugu literature and along with Sanskrit, the official language, the regional language had its due place in inscriptions.

Though the antiquity of Canarese goes back to the beginning of the Christian era as fragments in that language were discovered in an Egyptian Papyrus¹, regular Canarese literature is a thousand years old. Though even in the Canarese area Sanskrit occupies pre-eminent position in inscriptions, Canarese also occurs alongside.

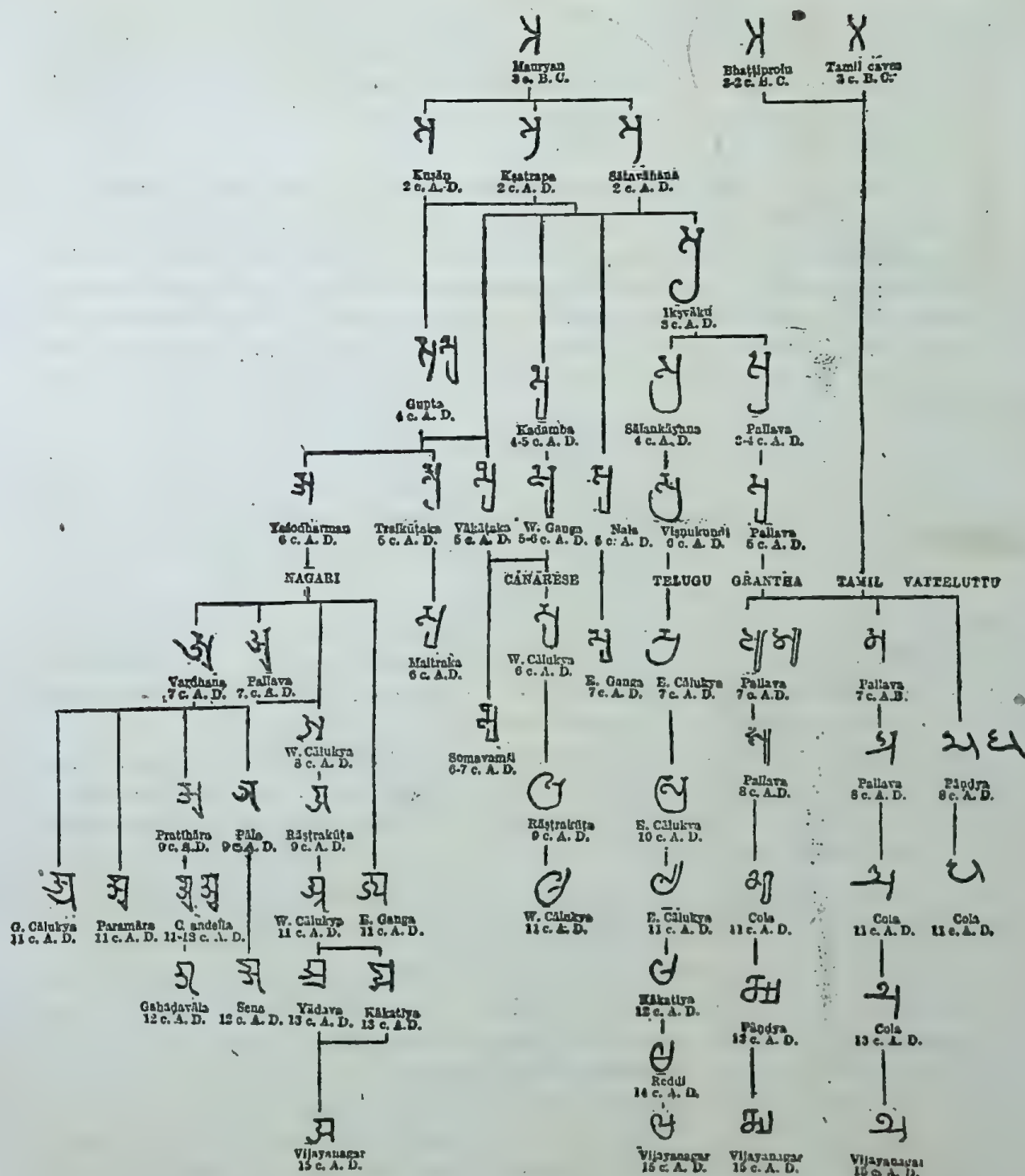
The scripts of South India have contributed enormously to the spread of Indian culture overseas. As pointed out elsewhere, the script of Ceylon is derived from Grantha Tamil. The script of the inscriptions in Java like those of Pūrṇavarman closely resembles the early script of South India. The same applies also to the characters used in the inscriptions of Annam or Campa. It is therefore clear that the contribution of South India to Indian epigraphy is considerable not only in the development of languages but also in the spread and evolution of the script which has travelled beyond the seas to supply characters for writing in the many islands of the Pacific. The crowning achievement of this cultural link between South India and South-East Asia is the great military conquest of Malaya by Rājendra Coḷa who commanded one of the finest navies that India ever possessed and brought South India and the East Indies into closer touch.

¹ *Linguistic Survey of India* by Sir G. A. Grierson (Calcutta, 1927), Vol. I, Part I, p. 87.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LETTERS OF ALPHABET DURING THE CENTURIES.

A.—This, the first letter of the alphabet (Fig. 20), is found in nearly three similar forms in the 3rd - 2nd centuries B.C. The Mauryan alphabet presents the letter in two ways, a vertical stroke with two arms moving away from a central point, either as straight or as curvilinear strokes. The letter from Bhaṭṭiprolu has straight strokes, while in the early inscriptions from the Tamil caves of South India it is of both these types in addition to a third type wherein the vertical stroke is also shown curvilinear. The next important phase in the development of this letter is seen in the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions, all of the 2nd century A.D. The lower arm develops greater curve in all the three, while the vertical stroke is lengthened considerably and the curve becomes a definite curl in the inscriptions of the time of the Ikṣvākus. The northern type of Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. shows a development from that of the Kuṣāṇ, while the Central Indian Gupta variety of the same period gives the letter a box-head and the vertical stroke descends down and the curl is replaced by a parallel upward stroke. This is uniformly repeated in all the letters of the box-headed variety, i.e., the Kadamba (4th-5th centuries A.D.), the Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.) and the Nāḷa (5th century A.D.), the Somavamśi (6th-7th centuries A.D.) and the Pallava (5th century A.D.), the box-head being most pronounced in the first four. This stroke is similarly formed in the Western Gaṅga, (5th-6th centuries A.D.) and Traikūṭaka (5th century A.D.), though the parallel stroke is rather close in the former. In the Śālaṅkāyana and early Pallava of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. and the Viṣṇukunḍin letters of the 6th century A.D. the bottom curve of the vertical stroke soars up with a flourish. In the Western Cālukyan and Maitraka (6th century A.D.) and Eastern Gaṅga (7th century A.D.) the vertical stroke repeats a parallel stroke, as in the box-headed variety, but in the Eastern Cālukya of the 7th century A.D. the curl soars up somewhat as in Viṣṇukunḍin. In contemporary script from the Tamil area, the Pallava Grantha gives the vertical stroke as a double line, the two arms tending to combine to form a loop before reaching the vertical stroke. In Tamil of the same period the arms combine and form a loop to reach a single vertical stroke. In the Nāgari of the time a single vertical stroke shoots up a little to left to form an angle at its bottom tip. From its centre a small line joins the two arms curved into a shape resembling the Arabic numeral 3 (double arched). The precursor of this letter is already present in the letter of Yaśodharman's inscription. These are the parents of the principal scripts, Nāgari, Canarese, Telugu, Grantha and Tamil.

In the further developments of the letter in Nagari, a horizontal top stroke connects the part shaped like double arch with the vertical stroke as in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. In the Paramāra inscriptions of the 11th century A.D. there is a nail head at the right end of the top stroke. The angular stroke at the bottom of the vertical line is



C.S. del.

FIG. 20.

lengthened and straightened in Yādava of the 13th century A.D. In the Nandināgarī variety of the Vijayanagara period the double arch that was all the while getting enlarged to the size of the vertical stroke stands quite equal to it. In the Eastern Gāṅga of the 11th century A.D. the small central stroke develops into a double curve, making the letter somewhat different from the rest of the Nagari letters.

In the Canarese area the lower end of the vertical stroke of the letter of the early Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D. runs up in semi-circular fashion to touch the top of the upper arm in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa records of the 9th century A.D. In later Western Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D. the letter is composed simply of the vertical stroke running up after forming a curve at the bottom and curling up close to the top. A small stroke in the Central space is all that is left of the arms. This is further developed in Hoysala of the 12th century A.D. and in the Vijayanagara period the letter is the same type for Telugu and Canarese.

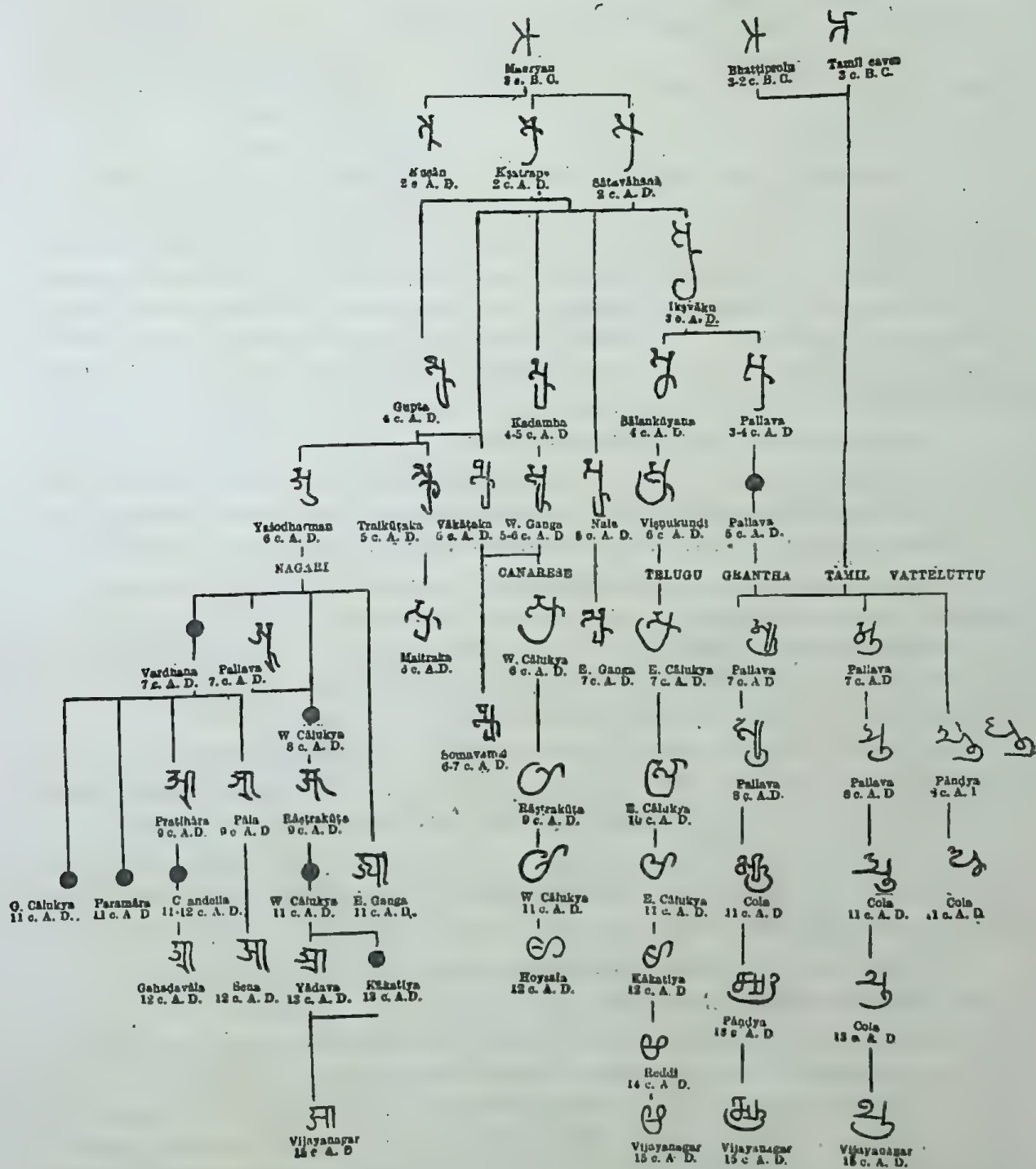
In the Vengi country the early Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. so develops that in the 10th century the lower arm curls twice, the upper one dwindling into a small serif which is touched by the tip of the vertical stroke that rushes up semi-circularly. The later developments of the letter are more or less allied to that of the Canarese alphabet.

In Grantha the loop of the arms becomes smaller in the 8th century but again enlarges in early Coḷa (11th century A.D.). In late Coḷa of the 13th century A.D. the top end of the arm which here appears curved develops into a regular angle-shaped top, the loop enlarges and this end of the arm pierces the stunted double line, occupying the place of the vertical stroke. This continues in the Vijayanagara period.

In Tamil the loop disappears in Pallava records of the 8th century A.D. and in the early Coḷa period the letter is just a curve attached to the top of a horizontal line against a vertical one. In late Coḷa (13th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the curve curls up at the top.

In Vatteluttu script the letter is somewhat like the Pallava letter of the 8th century but slanting towards left. Its development is seen in the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D.

A.—The second letter of the alphabet (Fig. 21) is a lengthened form of the first. This lengthening is indicated by a small dash added on top or in the middle of the vertical stroke in Mauryan script. It is similar in Bhaṭṭiprolu script. In the letter in the Tamil caves the top stroke is used. In the Kuṣāṇ script of the 2nd century A.D. the dash is at the lower end of the vertical stroke, while it is almost in the centre at the starting point of the arms in contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions, its shape being curved in the Kṣatrapa letter. In the 3rd century A.D. in the elongate Ikṣvāku letter the curved dash starts a little below the point where the arms start. The dash is curved and in similar position in Kadamba



C.S. del.

FIG. 21.

(4th-5th centuries A.D.), Śāṅkāyana (4th century A.D.), Pallava (3rd-4th centuries A.D.), Western Gaṅga (5th century A.D.), Nāla (5th century A.D.), Viṣṇukunḍin (6th century A.D.) and Eastern Gaṅga (7th century A.D.), except that in Western Gaṅga it is a little near the lower end. The 4th century Gupta letter being derived from Kuṣāṇ has an appendage of this curved dash from the vertical stroke below the point whence the arms emanate. In Maitraka (6th century A.D.), Somavamsī (6th-7th centuries A.D.), Western Cāḷukya (6th century A.D.), Eastern Cāḷukya (7th century A.D.), it is from the point where the arms start. In Pallava Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D. the curved stroke is towards the lower end, as also in Pallava Grantha and Tamil of the 7th century A.D., the curve running in a flourish in the last two. In Pallava Grantha however, the curve is double. While in Rāṣṭrakūṭa Nagari of the 9th century A.D. the dash is just in continuation of the central stroke, in other contemporaneous ones like Pratihāra and Pāla (9th century A.D.) and in all the later ones like Gāhaḍavāla, Sena, Yādava, etc., the dash becomes a line parallel to the vertical stroke and continues so in further developments.

In the Canarese area the dash is a curve projecting from the top of the vertical stroke which itself becomes a circle as in Rāṣṭrakūṭa (9th century A.D.) and in later developments, i.e., Western Cāḷukya (11th century A.D.) and Hoysala (12th century A.D.) it continues so.

In the Telugu area the position of the dash is almost similar in Eastern Cāḷukyan of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. and in Kākatiya (12th century A.D.), with this difference that the starting point of the dash is at an angular point in Eastern Cāḷukyan of the 10th century A.D., but in Redḍi (14th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the curve of the dash forms a definite loop and runs in to join the central stroke.

The letter in Pallava Grantha of the 8th century A.D. shows a curl at the bottom which develops into a double curve with a flourish at its bottom and in Coḷa (11th century A.D.). This continues in Pāṇḍya (13th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.)

In Tamil a curl at the bottom in Pallava (8th century A.D.) develops into a loop and curl in Coḷa (11th century A.D.). In Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the curl broadens with a flourish, shedding its loop.

In Vatteluttu script the letter has a loop and a curl at the lower end of the vertical stroke which itself is slanting, as already noted.

I.—In the Mauryan alphabet this letter (Fig. 22) is simply represented by three dots arranged triangularly. This arrangement continues even in the 2nd century A.D. in the Kṣatrapa inscriptions but in the contemporary Kuṣāṇ and Sātavāhana inscriptions the dots change into small dashes, one of which is vertical beside two parallel ones in the former. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the vertical dash is a little lengthened besides two dots in place of the other two dashes. In the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. the

dashes curve a little at their tips, and in the earliest Pallava records in Prakrit these appear as small crosses with arms extending so little beyond the point of intersection that they appear as dots more or less. The Kadamba letter of 4th-5th centuries A.D. is composed of a horizontal line with a slight central dip and ends bent down vertically a little above two dots. The form of this letter from the 5th to the 9th centuries A.D. both in Canarese and Telugu areas is only a little modified form of this type. In the former the line develops a small curve to the left and in the Telugu area to the right, but in both the horizontal length of the line is greater than the vertical part of it. In the Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.) the dip of the horizontal line is replaced by an additional vertical in centre; in Maitraka (6th century A.D.) the dots are replaced by dashes and in Eastern Gaṅga (7th century A.D.) the letter is much the same as in contemporary Cālukyan. In the earliest Nagari of the 7th century A.D., both in the North and the South Indian scripts, represented respectively in Vardhana and Pallava inscriptions, the letter is composed of a sign like an interrogation mark without the dot below, turned at an angle of 90° to the left with two dots a little above the curled head. This continues in all the later Nagari inscriptions of the Western Cālukyas, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Pratihāras, Paramāras, Candellas, etc., but from the 12th century A.D. onwards there is a change and a horizontal stroke above and two small circles joined together by a slanting stroke represent the letter in Gāhaḍavāla script (12th century A.D.). Two dots below with a triangle above forming the letter in Pāla script (9th century A.D.) develop into two ovate parts, situated slightly above a dash and combining below a small vertical stroke reaching the top line, which descends vertically towards its left, in Sena (12th century A.D.). In Yādava (13th century A.D.) a horizontally drawn hook connected with the top stroke beneath it and a dash looped at one end compose the letter which in Vijayanagara Nandināgari (15th century A.D.) shows a vertical hook with strokes at both ends. In Kalinga Gaṅga script of the 11th century A.D. two small circles with a sickle-shaped sign on top represent the letter.

In contemporary Western and Eastern Cālukyan the two dots below the double curved line above transform themselves into a loop in continuation of the left end of the curved line and the line composing the loop develops in continuation to its left during the centuries in the Canarese and Telugu areas and is very pronounced in the Vijayanagara period (15th century A.D.).

In the early Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the curved line above runs down to the right to meet one of the two circlet dots below. Sometimes the circlet dot touching the line is absent when the line turns up to run up parallel. In the 8th century Pallava the first-mentioned variety continues as also a type in which the line running down slants to the left and a dot occurs on the right. In the 11th century Coḷa script the letter starts with a curl, curves twice, slants down to its right and again down to its left. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya the last slant of the letter straightens and it continues so thereafter.

The letter in Tamil of the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D. is shaped somewhat like the modern Arabic numeral 3 with a pronounced curve at the top start. The lower half of the figure is lengthened somewhat in Pallava script of the 8th century A.D., while the same is in addition a little broadened in Coḷa (11th century A.D.). In Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) and later inscriptions, the lower part is flattened somewhat, while in this and the earlier Coḷa (13th century A.D.) the tail end almost encircles the figure in a flourish.

The letter in Vatteluttu of the 8th century A.D. is peculiarly shaped, beginning with a broad curve almost forming a circle, then developing horizontally to the right to rise again and slant towards the curve, finally ending in an arc which is somewhat angular. The curve hooks up at its start and broadens in Coḷa (11th century A.D.), the rest of the letter getting simplified into two arcs one in continuation of another.

I.—This letter (Fig. 23) in its earliest form is seen in the inscriptions of the Tamil caves of the 3rd century B.C. where it is a vertical stroke flanked by two dots. In the Kṣatrapa and Kuṣāṇ alphabet of the 2nd century A.D. the vertical stroke has a small serif at the top and is curved to left at the lower end. This continues so in Gupta script two centuries later but in Pallava script of about the same time the vertical stroke is represented slanting from right to left with the dots above and below it.

The form of the letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions of the 6th century A.D., and the later development in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions a century later is just a modification of the Gupta type, the curve being replaced by just a thickening of the lower end. In letter of the 9th century A.D., this stroke separates into two parts one as a double arched serif above the dots and a hook below.

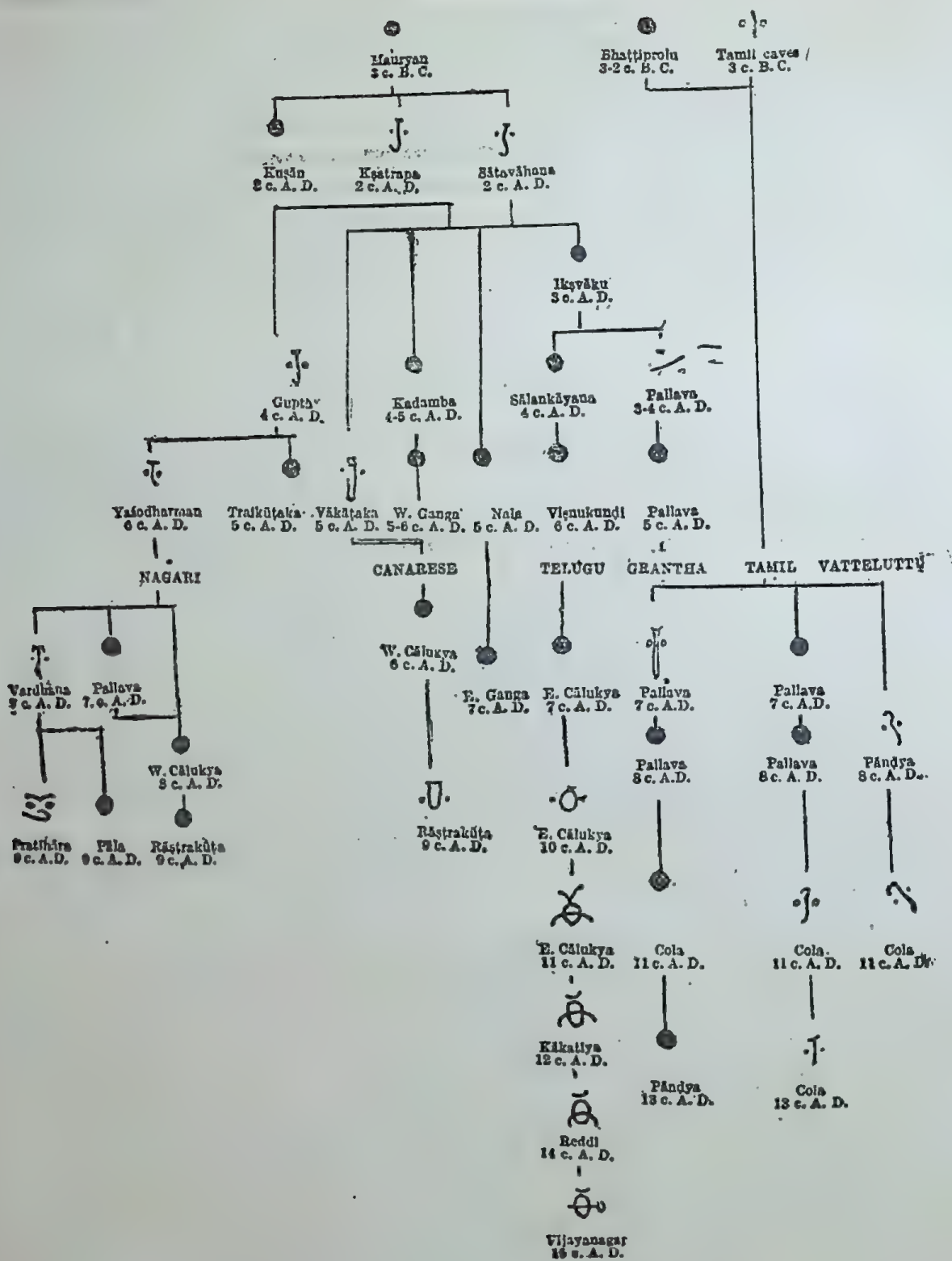
In Vākāṭaka script of the 5th century A.D., the box head appears as usual and the lower curve is emphasised by the formation of double lion as in *ra*.

The later development in Cālukyan area is judged by the Rāṣṭrakuṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. where the end of the curve has joined the serif to form a stumpy tube-shape with the dots on either side.

In the Telugu area about this time the form is the same but in the next century the body of the letter is more ovoid as seen in the Eastern Cālukyan alphabet of the 10th century A.D. In the next century the serif as usual in other letter of the time takes a V shape and the two dots change into an arched stroke running across the belly of the letter and this continues thenceforwards.

In the Tamil area the Grantha letter is composed of the dots on either side of two close parallel strokes joined by a serif at the top as in *ra*; and the Tamil letter is a single vertical stroke with the serif modified as in other letters of the alphabet and with strokes.

In Vatteluttu script the letter is almost the same as the Tamil one except that it slants form left to right.



C.S. del.

FIG. 23.

U.—In the Mauryan script it is just two lines, a long vertical and short horizontal one forming a right-angle and resembling 'L' (Fig. 24). It is the same type in contemporary script at Bhāṭṭiprolu and in the Tamil caves of the Pāṇḍya country. In the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣātrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. and Ikṣvāku of the 3rd century A.D. the angle tends slightly to become acute and a serif is developed at the top. In the earliest Prakrit Pallava of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D., the slanting vertical line is rather pronounced in comparison to the horizontal one which dwindles. In Gupta of the 4th century A.D., it is shaped like a hook with the angle rounded, and in all the box-headed varieties the serif is replaced by the box-head, the letter itself looking somewhat like an inverted question mark touching the dot transformed into a box. In the script of Yaśodharman's time and Nagarī from the 7th century A.D. the shape definitely tends to resemble the Arabic numeral 3 with a nail head, as in Pallava, Vardhana (7th century A.D.) Western Cālukya (8th century A.D.), Paramāra and Candella (11th century A.D.); or serif, as in Rāṣṭrakūṭa (9th century A.D.), later Western Cālukya (11th century A.D.), Gāhaḍavāla, Sena (12th century A.D.), Yādava Kākatiya (13th century A.D.), etc.

The letter in the earliest Western Cālukya (6th century A.D.) is almost a semi-circular curve with serif on top; this gets flattened and bulbous and the serif changes into a slight topward projection of the line and this develops more obviously in the succeeding centuries in the Canarese area till in the Hoysāla (12th century A.D.) the line on top slants back and a horizontal stroke is introduced in the belly immediately above the lower line which is double arched.

In the Telugu area the earliest Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century has no serif but the semi-circular body of the letter lifts up its top which definitely projects vertically in the Eastern Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D. and Kākatiya (12th century A.D.). In the last two centuries the lower line tends to develop a notch which produces a double curve and in the Kākatiya letter a horizontal stroke is added in the middle space which continues later.

In the Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the slanting vertical line diminishes in size and develops a curve to the left while the horizontal lower stroke lengthens and slants downwards. The curve develops from the 8th century A.D. onwards, while the base line tends to rise up again in the Coḷa period (11th century A.D.) and definitely becomes straight from the later Pāṇḍya period (13th century A.D.). The top curve enlarges and definitely curls in the Vijayanagara period (15th century A.D.) It is exactly the same in Tamil.

In Vatteluttu of 8th century A.D. the letter starts approximately the same as in the Pallava Tamil or Grantha, except that the base line has no slant, is longer and curved, with a definite inward angle at the end. The curve of the body of the letter tends somewhat to broaden and straighten in Coḷa (11th century A.D.).

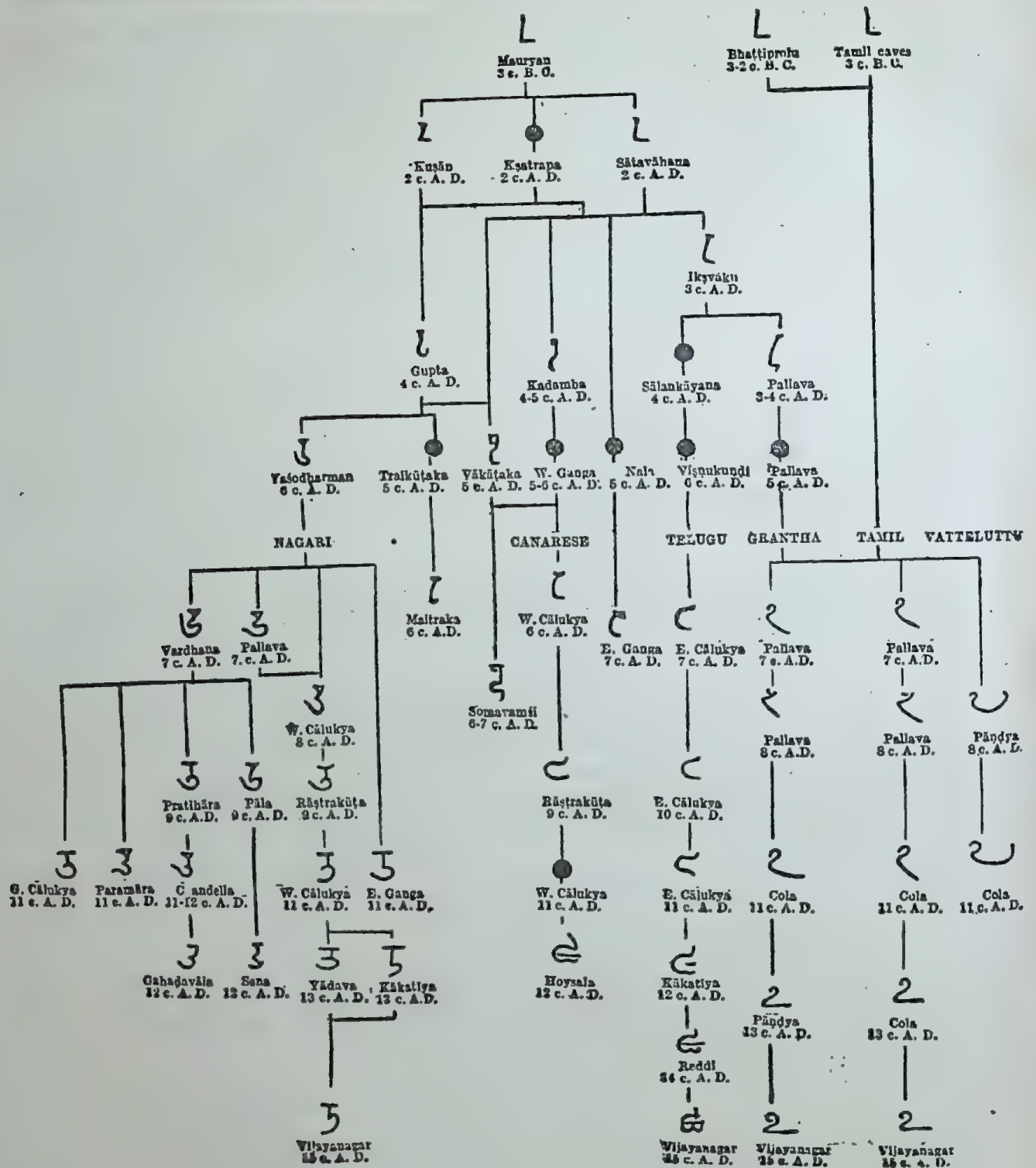


FIG. 24.

O.S. del.

E.—In Mauryan script this (Fig. 25) is shaped like a triangle, composed of a vertical stroke and two lines from either end meeting to the right at a central point. It is similar in the Tamil caves, except that the two lines do not meet actually at the point. In the Kuṣāṇ script of the 2nd century A.D. the triangle is so shaped that it has two angles on top and one below and in contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana it is quite the reverse. In Gupta of the 4th century it is similar to the latter. In Ikṣvāku (3rd century A.D.) the letter assumes a contour not unlike that of the human stomach, i.e., a deep curve lengthened towards the top right, bounded above by a shallow arc. In Śālikāyana (4th century A.D.) the belly of the letter protrudes to the left and the bottom curves in at the centre. This last feature of the bottom is absent in Pallava of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. In Viṣṇukūṇḍin of the 6th century A.D. the developed belly and the arch in the bottom are present but there is a break where the line of the belly reaches the vertical stroke. In box-headed script, the letter is represented by a square with the vertical line on the right prolonged above. This vertical line has a small top serif in Vākāṭaka script (5th century A.D.) and Somavamśi (6th-7th centuries A.D.) which it lacks in Kadamba in 4th-5th centuries A.D. In the Maitraka (6th century A.D.) it partakes of characteristics of both the box-headed and the Cālukyan varieties.

The letter takes a shape tending towards that of the human heart in the script of Yaśodharman (6th century A.D.) which becomes more pronounced in the Vardhana and Pallava script of the 7th century A.D., and in one form or other it is only a development from this in all the later varieties of Nagari. The vertical stroke to the right is a little lengthened in Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa of the 9th century A.D., in the Paramāra, Western Cālukya (11th century A.D.) and the Gāhaḍavāla 12th century A.D.). The top line separates from the boundary line to the left and curves in Sena (12th century A.D.) while in Yādava (13th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the tips of the line to the left curved in the former and straight in the latter and the shorter straight line to the right do not touch each other. In Kākatīya (13th century A.D.) it is triangularly shaped like the Vijayanagara letter with the lines from the sides meeting at the bottom.

Ā medial.—This (Fig. 26) is denoted in the Mauryan script by a small dash added to the consonant usually to the top right; but sometimes as in *jā* or *ṇā* it is a middle stroke and not a top one. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu inscriptions this stroke is in addition to a stroke already existing as a part of the consonant letter. In the Kuṣāṇ inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. this is represented sometimes as a dash but generally by a stroke slanting to right. In *jā* the stroke runs up somewhat in a curve in continuation of the central stroke. In the inscriptions of the Western Kṣatrapa, as illustrated by those of Uśavadāta and Rudradāman, the medial *ā* is represented by a simple dash usually at the top right but sometimes also at the centre, as in *bā*, *bhā*, etc.

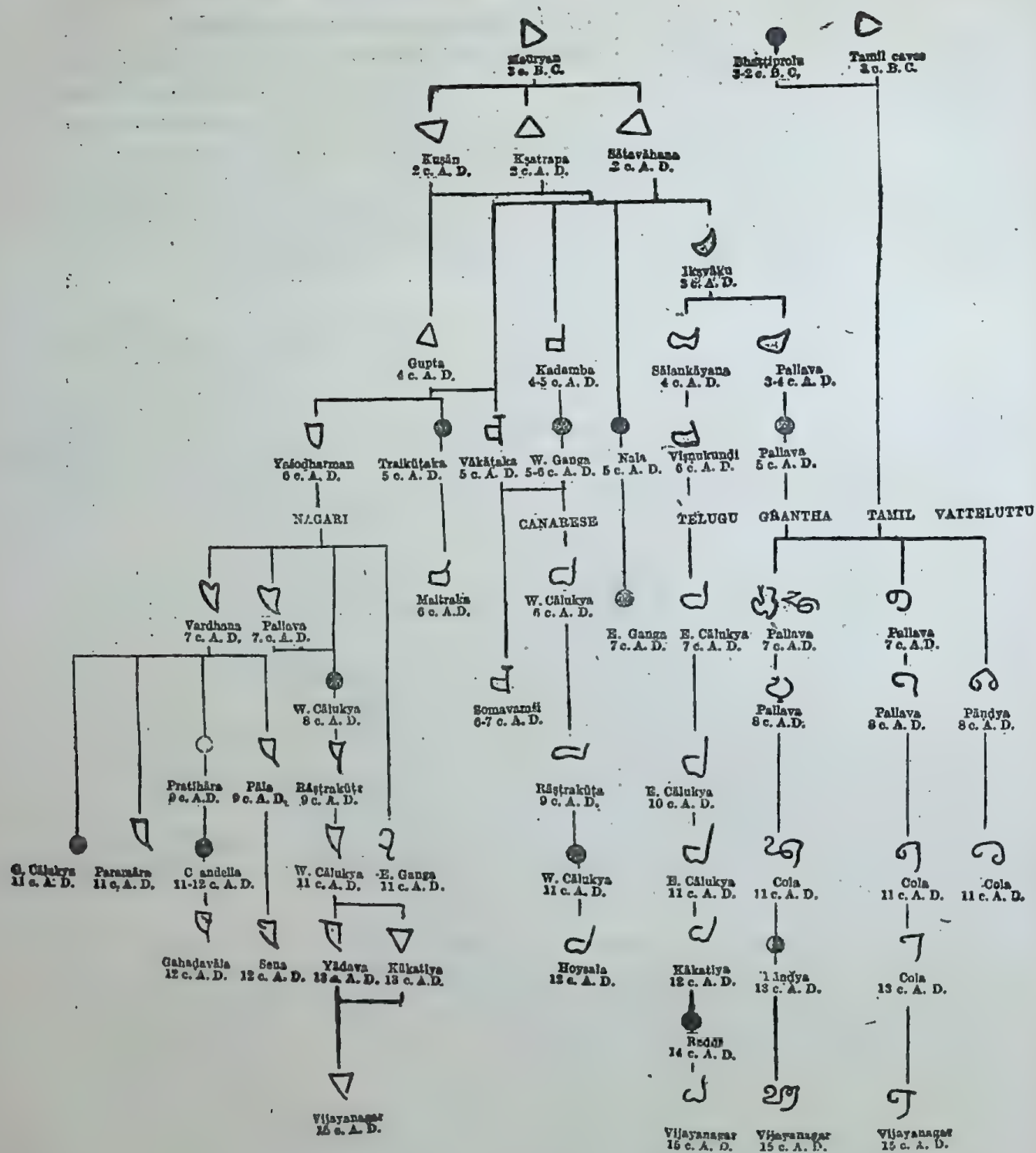


FIG. 25.

C.S. del.

In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the Krishna valley this is represented generally by a horizontal top stroke, slightly curving towards its tip, and also by the earlier simple stroke without curve. In the early Pallava Prakrit charters the curve of the stroke is sometimes as in the Ikṣvāku inscriptions, but sometimes the curve is more pronounced or it definitely develops a downward arm. The stroke for *jā* has a definitely greater flourish.

In the Gupta letters of the 4th century A.D. medial \bar{a} is generally depicted as a not-too-straight horizontal top stroke but sometimes by an upward stroke, as in *jī* or *tā*, in continuation of the central stroke in the case of the former and curving down from the top stroke to proceed up, in the case of the latter.

In the 6th century A.D., in the earliest Nagari letter to be seen in inscriptions, like Yaśodharman's, medial \bar{a} is a slightly bent horizontal top stroke or a vertical one shooting up and ending in a curve to the right. The stroke is sometimes upwards from the bottom line or downwards from the top line, as in *nā* and *mā* respectively. In the 7th century Nagari, as illustrated in Harṣavardhana's charters, the upward stroke is above the top line, shaped like a query, and the bent horizontal stroke definitely becomes a short abrupt downward stroke. In the inscriptions of the Pratihāras of the 9th century this stroke is elongated, while upward strokes are also sometimes found as in *tā*. In all subsequent Nagari inscriptions like those of the Paramāras in Gujarat and Malwa area and the Senas in Bengal, the downward side stroke elongated is the only form to denote medial \bar{a} .

In Central, Southern and Western India in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. the medial \bar{a} is denoted by a horizontal top stroke to the right curving downwards, as seen in Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.), Pallava (5th century A.D.) and early Western Cālukya (6th century A.D.) inscriptions, though the upward stroke also occurs sometimes as in *nā*. Both the varieties occur in Eastern Cālukyan script of the 9th century with a change that likens the strokes to those of the 6th century Nagari.

In the Telugu inscriptions of the 12th and 13th centuries A.D., illustrated by those of the Kākatīyas and Reḍḍis, the horizontal stroke is with a definite curve which later becomes a curl to the right.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., medial \bar{a} is represented by the addition to the top line of the consonant letter to the right, a small crescent with a wavy vertical stroke above it in its centre. In Pallava Grantha of the 8th century, upward and side strokes to right and in contemporary Tamil the side strokes above, represent this sign. The side stroke is more elaborated in the Coḷa period, and the 15th century Vijayanagara inscriptions the medial \bar{a} in Grantha and Tamil is represented by a shorter and longer vertical line with top stroke.

I medial.—In the 3rd century B.C., as seen in Aśokan inscriptions the medial *i* (Fig. 27) is a horizontal top stroke to the right, which forms an angle by darting up vertically. In the Kuṣāṇ script of the 2nd century A.D. this curves up to the left and sometimes bends doubly

| | | |
|---|-------|----------------------------|
| - | 𑀘𑀓𑀭𑀢𑀺 | Mauryan 3 c. B. C. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Kuṣāṇ 2 c. A.D. |
| - | 𑀧𑀢𑀺 | Uṣavādāta c. A.D. |
| - | 𑀧𑀢𑀺 | Kṣātrapa 2 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀘𑀓𑀭𑀢𑀺 | Ikṣvāku 3 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Pallava 3-4 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀘𑀓𑀭𑀢𑀺 | Pallava 2-4 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺 | Gupta 4 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀘𑀓𑀭𑀢𑀺 | Yaśodharman 6 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀘𑀓𑀭𑀢𑀺 | Harṣavardhana 7 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Pratībāra 9 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Paramāra 11 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Sena 12 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Vākāṭaka 5 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Pallava 5 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | W. Cālukya 6 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | E. Cālukya 10 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Kākatīya 12 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Reddi 13 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Pallava 7 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Pallava 8 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Cola 11 c. A.D. |
| 𑀓 | 𑀧𑀢𑀺𑀲𑀺 | Nayāṅgar 15 c. A.D. |

towards left and right. In Uṣavadāta's inscription the leftward curve is the feature, but in inscriptions of Kṣatrapa Rudradāman of the 2nd century A.D. the leftward curve is deeper. In contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions the curves are much the same, as in Kuṣān. In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D. the leftward curve tends to rise up, sometimes straightening up but always forming a curl at the tip, occasionally the main curve itself being right instead of leftward, as in *ḷi*. In Pallava Brahmi of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D., curves are towards left generally and to right occasionally as in *ḷi* to denote medial *i*.

In early Gupta inscriptions the leftward curve is the sign for the letter. For the first time in the Nagari of the 6th century A.D., as in Yaśodharman's inscriptions, the curve runs leftward and turns right to form a double curve in flourishes or proceeds up leftwards and ends by running down vertically, or, simply curves left and runs down deep vertically. In the 7th century Nagari inscriptions, like those of Harṣavardhana, the flourishes increase, the leftward stroke curving twice and sometimes having an inverted crescent added to the tip. The plainer form is the leftward curve which curves down deep vertically. This second type continues in the Nagari of the Pratihāra inscriptions of the 9th century A.D., a curl at the top end being present very often. In the Paramāra inscriptions of the 11th century the curve straightens or bends a little inward in the centre and in the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D. the curve is shallow and its downward course vertically straight.

In the Central, Western and South Indian early mediaeval scripts, like the Vākāṭaka, the early Pallava and the early Western Cālukyan, of the 5th-6th centuries A.D., medial *i* is represented by an upturned crescent streak, which sometimes appears as a full circle where the shape of the top stroke of the letter demands it.

This definitely flattens at the top in the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D., though it continues much as in its earlier form in the Kākatīya and Reḍḍi inscriptions of the 12-13th centuries A.D.

In the Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. this curve starts after forming a hook shape from above the serif of any letter; the hook is however absent when there is no serif involved and one end slightly curls. The simple semi-circular curve and full circle at the top of letters is the sign of the medial *i* in Pallava Grantha and Tamil of the 8th century A.D., while in later inscriptions, like those of the Coḷas in the 10th-11th centuries and the Vijayanagara kings of the 14th-15th centuries, an inverted crescent streak or arc is the usual sign in Grantha and Tamil, except occasionally when, as in *ṭi*, there is a special sign to denote the medial element.

I medial.—In Mauryan script medial *i* (Fig. 27) is represented by doubling the sign of medial *i*, as in *mī*, *ṭī*, etc., or by two parallel slanting strokes, as in *thi*. In the Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. the sign for the medial is composed of two curves from either side of the top point of the letter forming horse-shoe shape. In Uṣavadāta's inscriptions at

| | | | | |
|----|-----|----------------------------|-------|---|
| ୨ | ୨୮୫ | Manryan ୫ c. B. C. | ୦ ୪ ୫ | ୫ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Kuṣāṇ ୨ c. A.D. | ୦ ୪ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Uṣavādāta c. A.D. | ୪ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Kṣatrapa ୨ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Sātavāhana ୨ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Iṣvāku ୫ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Pallava ୩-୪ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Gupta ୪ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Yaśodharman ୫ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Harṣavardhana ୭ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Pratibhāra ୯ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Paramāra ୧୧ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Śoṇa ୧୨ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Vākātaka ୫ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Pallava ୫ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | W. Chūlukya ୬ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | E. Chūlukya ୧୦ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Kāṁtiya ୧୨ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Reddī ୧୩ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Pallava ୭ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Pallava ୮ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Cola ୧୧ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |
| ୨୨ | ୨୮୫ | Vijayanagar ୧୫ c. A.D. | ୫ ୫ | ୦ |

FIG. 27.

C.S. del.

Nasik the curve to the right runs up and turns slightly to form the shape of an upturned interrogation mark without the dot. In the Kṣatrapa and Śātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. the curves one on either side of the top point of the letter form horse-shoe shape or a nearly complete circle. In the Ikṣvāku letters of the 3rd century A.D. one of the two curves shoots up and both sometimes curl at the top end. In Pallava letters of the Prakrit charters 3rd-4th centuries A.D. the two curves are not quite so different as in the Ikṣvāku medial *ī* sign.

A curve to the left and a vertical from the right side of the top point usually denote medial *ī* in Gupta letters, as in the Allahabad inscriptions of Samudragupta; but two curves, one rising slightly higher than the other also occur frequently. In early Nagari, as represented in Yaśodharman's inscriptions, medial *ī* is a hook rising up to the left from the top point of the letter. This curls in and curves out again to the right with a flourish and gathers an upturned crescent at its tip in the Nagari of the 7th century A.D. as in Harṣavardhana's charters. In later Nagari, as in the Pratihāra inscriptions of the 9th century A.D., medial *ī* starts as a curve above the top of letters and ends as a curvilinear stroke running parallel to the height of the letter. The top curve of the sign changes sometimes into a curl in letters of the Paramāra inscriptions of the 11th century A.D. In the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D. the stroke is straight except at its lower end.

In the Vākāṭaka script of Central India a horse-shoe shaped curve and a small central vertical stroke represents the medial *ī*. In early Pallava inscriptions of the same date, 5th century A.D., and in early Western Cālukyan letters of the 6th century A.D., the medial sign is a horse-shoe shaped curve that curls to left and forms a spiral. In Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions of the 10th century A.D. the horse-shoe shaped curve flattens at the top, and a small hook-shaped vertical stroke is added in the middle. In Kākatiya and Reḍḍi inscriptions of the 12th and 13th centuries A.D., a curve curling to the left represents medial *ī*. The same sign obtains in Pallava Grantha and Tamil of the 7th-8th century A.D., while in the Cola and Vijayanagara inscriptions from the 10th to the 16th centuries A.D., the curl of the curve is to the right.

U medial.—In Aśokan Brahmi medial *u* (Fig. 28) is denoted either by a stroke which is either horizontal or downward vertical in continuation or issuing from a bottom point of the letter. In the Kuṣāṇ script of the 2nd century A.D. the horizontal stroke curves a little at both ends, while the vertical downward stroke lengthens. It is same in the inscriptions of Uṣavadāta, though the horizontal retains the same simple earlier form. In Kṣatrapa script of the 2nd century A.D. the horizontal changes into a short downward stroke, curving up in the right into a hook, and the vertical stroke slants slightly to left at the lower end with slight small curve at the tip. In contemporary Śātavāhana inscriptions the sign for medial *u* is either a straight horizontal stroke or a slightly bent or downward elongate stroke, slanting slightly towards its end. In the Ikṣvāku letters of the 3rd century A.D. the short hook-like

| | | | | |
|----|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|-------|
| 1 | 1 4 1 | Mauryan 3 c. B. C. | 1 4 1 | = 11 |
| 2 | 2 4 3 | Kushan 2 c. A.D. | 2 4 3 | = 14 |
| 3 | 3 1 2 | Uçavadita c. A.D. | 3 1 2 | ?? |
| 4 | 4 2 1 | Ksatrapa 2 c. A.D. | 4 2 1 | 2 = |
| 5 | 5 1 2 4 | Sätavähana 2 c. A.D. | 5 1 2 4 | 1 |
| 6 | 6 2 1 3 | Iksvaku 3 c. A.D. | 6 2 1 3 | 1 = |
| 7 | 7 1 2 | Pallava 3-4 c. A.D. | 7 1 2 | 1 |
| 8 | 8 1 2 3 4 | Gupta 4 c. A.D. | 8 1 2 3 4 | 2 5 |
| 9 | 9 2 3 4 | Yasodharman 6 c. A.D. | 9 2 3 4 | 5 1 |
| 10 | 10 2 3 4 | Harsavardhana 7 c. A.D. | 10 2 3 4 | 5 2 |
| 11 | 11 2 3 4 | Pratihära 9 c. A.D. | 11 2 3 4 | 2 |
| 12 | 12 2 3 4 | Paramära 11 c. A.D. | 12 2 3 4 | 2 |
| 13 | 13 2 3 4 | Sena 12 c. A.D. | 13 2 3 4 | 2 |
| 14 | 14 2 3 4 | Vakätaka 6 c. A.D. | 14 2 3 4 | 1 1 |
| 15 | 15 2 3 4 | Pallava 5 c. A.D. | 15 2 3 4 | 1 1 1 |
| 16 | 16 2 3 4 | W. Cälukya 6 c. A.D. | 16 2 3 4 | 1 1 |
| 17 | 17 2 3 4 | E. Cälukya 7 c. A.D. | 17 2 3 4 | 1 1 |
| 18 | 18 2 3 4 | E. Cälukya 10 c. A.D. | 18 2 3 4 | 1 1 1 |
| 19 | 19 2 3 4 | Käkatya 12 c. A.D. | 19 2 3 4 | 1 1 |
| 20 | 20 2 3 4 | Reddi 13 c. A.D. | 20 2 3 4 | 1 1 |
| 21 | 21 2 3 4 | Pallava 7 c. A.D. | 21 2 3 4 | 1 1 1 |
| 22 | 22 2 3 4 | Pallava 8 c. A.D. | 22 2 3 4 | 1 1 1 |
| 23 | 23 2 3 4 | Cola 11 c. A.D. | 23 2 3 4 | 1 1 1 |
| 24 | 24 2 3 4 | Vijayanagara 15 c. A.D. | 24 2 3 4 | 1 1 1 |

curve and the more common elongate downward stroke ending in a broad curve to left are the two forms of medial *u*. In the Pallava Prakrit charters that are close in date to the Ikṣvāku inscriptions, there are three forms, *viz.*, the elongate downward stroke with final curve to left, the short downward stroke curving and fully rising up to right hook-like and the horizontal stroke with curved tip. As may be observed in all these early letters of various dates and in the letters of later date as well, the horizontal stroke in any form is added to letters like *ka* or *ra*, i.e., those with a single long vertical stroke, extending down beyond the body proper of similar letters; it is added either somewhere near the end of the vertical or at the end itself. In the earliest letters the horizontal is used for letters like *ta*, *bha*, etc., i.e. those with more than one short stroke composing the body of the letter, but this soon changes into a small hook as in *tu*, *gu*, *śu* in somewhat later letters. The downward elongate stroke, which is at first short, then long, subsequently slanting and curved and lastly straight and hook-shaped at the end, is used in the letters with a stroke composing the base of the body, as in *ba*, *na*, *pa*, *sa*, etc.

In the 4th century A.D. in the Gupta inscription on the Allahabad pillar all the three varieties occur; the horizontal stroke is added at the very end of letters, like *ra*, and the curve is so pronounced that it appears sickle-shaped; the downward elongate stroke is just straight; and the hook-shaped stroke descends to left and rises up again at the right. In early Nagari, represented in Yaśodharman's inscription, the sickle-shaped hook and the downward elongate stroke with a small barb at the tip represent medial *u*. This continues even in the 7th century A.D. In the Pratihāra and Paramāra inscriptions ranging from the 9th to the 11th century A.D. the sickle-shaped sign continues. In the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century this as well as the barb are found, in addition to a small sign composed of two strokes forming an upward right-angle to right and is added to letters like *ra* to sound *ru*.

In the Central Indian script of the 5th century A.D., as seen in Vākāṭaka inscriptions, hook-shaped signs to right or left form sharp angles, as also the horizontal transformed into a sign, composed of two strokes, forming a downward right angle to right. In Pallava script of the same date in South India the hook-shaped sign to right and the somewhat curved horizontal stroke are, as in the Central Indian script, lacking definite angularities, but the hook-shaped sign to right is drawn with a flourish to form a semi-circle below a letter from the tip of one of the lower arms of the letter, as in *gu*. In early Western Cālukyan script, a century later, in the same letter, the semi-circle drawn with a flourish narrows into a long drawn hook, with its end shooting up the whole length of the letter. The other two forms are as in the early Pallava script of the 5th century A.D. In early Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century the hook-shaped sign is just composed of two parallel vertical strokes connected at the lower end by a small curve, though the regular hook shape continues even in the 11th century script of the Eastern Cālukyas. In the Kākatiya and Redḍi inscriptions of the

12th and 13th centuries, medial *u* is of crescent shape, which is occasionally lengthened towards top to right.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., medial *u* is represented by two signs : the hook-shaped sign transformed into something like U, compressed and elongated ; and the sign formed by a sweeping flourish, resembling a sickle somewhat but with a slight curl at the tip, which makes the whole sign look somewhat like a creeper tendril. In Pallava Grantha of the next century the compressed U-shaped sign, a crescent-shaped sign and a sign composed of two strokes, suggesting the outline of one end of a boat, represent medial *u*, while a sign like the lower half of No. 3 and another of two strokes suggesting ' L ' reversed, represent it in Tamil. In Cola Grantha script of the 11th century A.D. the U-shaped sign and a clamp-shaped sign represent this, while in the Tamil script a downward vertical stroke and a sign like an upturned question mark, without the dot, are used. In the 15th century Vijayanagara script and later, the medial in Grantha is either an angular U with the bottom line projecting a little to the left, or is a sign somewhat like No. 3, the former added beneath and the latter beside the consonant. In Tamil it is a slight modification of the earlier Cola type.

Ū medial.—In Asokan Brahmi *ū* (Fig. 28) is represented by two strokes added to the bottom of letters. The strokes are either horizontal or vertical. In Kuṣāṇ letters of the 2nd century A.D. the horizontal strokes slant a bit and the vertical strokes join at the top to form a fork. In Uṣavadāta's inscriptions the fork is replaced by a sign resembling a question mark without the dot. In Kṣatrapa letters of the 2nd century A.D. a short and a long and sometimes bent-up stroke made up the medial *ū*, as also the parallel horizontal strokes, which are added to the right not at the tip but in the middle. The sign, consisting of the longer and shorter vertical strokes, occurs in contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions as well. In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions the shorter of the two vertical strokes is a horizontal stroke that slants downwards a bit and the vertical downward stroke is like ' J ' in written script. The parallel strokes are also used sometimes and these slant to right. In the early Pallava Prakrit charters it is somewhat like the first mentioned type, occurring in Ikṣvāku letters, but reversed.

In the 4th century Gupta, inscriptions, one sign is a vertical downward stroke running to the left as a curve, as in *dhū*, *śū*, etc., and a curve running up into a vertical, to which is attached a horizontal stroke terminally curved downwards as in *bhū*. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions this is represented as an upturned sickle with small horizontal stroke to right, as in *gū*, *bhū*, etc., and as a downward half arrow mark with long horizontal stroke to the left issuing from about the centre of the vertical, as in *cū*. Both these types continue in the Nagari of Harṣavardhana's time. In the Pratihāra script of the 9th century A.D. it is like a hook with its straight end slanting down to right. In the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D. the type just mentioned and another composed of two brackets added centrally to the vertical of the letter to the right make up this medial. The former may be seen in *śū*, *bhū*, etc., and the latter in *rū*.

In the box-headed Vākāṭaka script of Central India, a downward vertical, bent twice to form an open rectangle, with a long slantingly curved or short horizontal stroke to top, is added to the letter to represent this sound. In the case of letters, like *ta*, *bha*, *na*, etc., the lower end of the vertical is bent upward to right and a stroke added to the vertical to the right. In the case of letters, like *pa*, *ṣa*, *ha*, *sa*, etc., the vertical is prolonged downward and bent to the left, and a long slanting curved stroke is added at its top base. In early Pallava of the 5th century A.D., one variety is the sweeping downward curve with a central stroke, as in *gū*, and *bhū*, another a downward vertical, bent and continued upward parallel, with a long curved stroke at its top, as in *pū* and a third composed of two small slightly curvilinear horizontal strokes added to letters like *ka*, *ra*, etc. In the early Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D., the downward vertical which shoots up again, curves at the top to right near the serif to form this sign, as in *bhū*, or to left even below the base line as in *pū*. In Eastern Cālukya of the 7th century A.D., and even in the 10th century A.D., the same are repeated. In Kākātīya script of the 12th century A.D. a small sign already observable in 10th century Eastern Cālukyan *kū* develops into a sign almost like a reverse 'S' laid on its face. The starting point of this sign forms a sharp angle, instead of a curve, in Redḍi script of the 13th century A.D.

In early Pallava Grantha a sweeping curve around the double vertical 'U' sign below the letter, as in *dū* and a double arch inside the sweeping curve, as in *śū*, make up this sign. The downward double vertical with a long horizontal stroke to left, terminally curved, as in *mū* and *dhū*, and a triple curve horizontally to left, to right slanting downwards and again to left horizontally, as in *śū*, represent the sign. In the 11th century Coḷa script the double vertical below the letter has a sweeping curve, double-arched, at the right and encircling it, as in *mū*.

Ṛ medial.—This medial (Fig. 29) in its earliest form may be seen as it occurs in Uṣava-dāta's inscriptions, where it is a curve added beneath letters having a base line, as in *vr*, or to the vertical stroke running downward at some point in the middle, as in *kr*. In Kṣatrapa inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D., it is similar. In the time of the Pallava Prakrit inscriptions of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. *r* medial is a hook with long stalk added below the letter as in *br*.

In Gupta script of the 4th century the curve added beneath the letters is reversed, as in *kr*, *hr*, and in the inscriptions of Yaśodharman and later Nagari medial *r* is like a reversed upturned query mark without a dot, added to the base or lower end of vertical of letters, as in *vr*, *kr*, *gr*, etc.

In the box-headed Vākāṭaka inscriptions the sign is as in the earliest Prakrit Pallava charters, except that the curve is more graceful and is actually a pronounced curl rather than a curve. This occurs with a less pronounced curl in Western Cālukyan script of the

| | | |
|---|------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ | Δ† | Mauryan 3 c. B. C. |
| ✓ | †‡ | Ksatrapa 2 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | 9 | Pallava 3-4 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | †‡‡‡ | Gupta 4 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡‡‡ | Yasodharmas 8 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡‡‡ | Harsavardhana 7 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡ | Paramāra 11 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡ | Sena 12 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡‡ | Vākātaka 5 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡ | Pallava 5 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡ | W. Cālukya 6 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡ | E. Cālukya 10 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡ | Kākatiya 12 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡‡ | Reddi 13 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡‡ | Pallava 7 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡‡ | Pallava 8 c. A. D. |
| ✓ | ‡‡ | Cola 11 c. A. D. |

FIG. 29.

O.S. de.

6th century A.D. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D. the curl becomes more graceful and prominent than ever, and a stroke leading on to the final curl undulates gracefully and continues so in Kākatiya and later scripts of Telugu.

In early Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. almost the same form of the medial continues, with the curl changed into a broader curve beneath the letter. In the 8th century Pallava Grantha the stroke leading on to the final curve straightens but changes again in Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. In this script the old form is the usual type but there is also a special form, as in *kr*, where the reversed curve as in Nagari runs across the letter in continuation of the curved cross stroke.

E medial.—In Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. this (Fig. 30) is represented by a stroke added to the top left. In Kuṣāṇ script of the 2nd century A.D. this slants upward to left. In Uṣavadāta's inscriptions and in those of the Kṣatrapas and Sātavāhanas it is just a top left stroke as before. In the Ikṣvāku letters of the 3rd century A.D. this stroke slightly curves terminally and more so in the letters of Pallava Prakrit charters and sometimes even slants, as in *me*.

In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the sign is both the upward slanting stroke to left as in *me* and the usual horizontal stroke slightly curved terminally. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions a long stroke gracefully shaped like a feather, either slanting up or horizontal, represents this sign, as in *no* and *he*, as also a short curve to top left of the letter, as in *dhe*. These strokes curve gracefully and form the shape of streamers or banners above the letter's serif in Harṣavarddhana's inscriptions. In the 9th century Pratihāra script the simpler, slightly terminally-curved, horizontal stroke to left is the only one present. In Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. a gracefully curved, slanting upward stroke and a vertical to left represent this sign. Both are present in the Sena script of the next century.

A small terminally-curved leftward top stroke represents this sign in the Vākāṭaka script of the 5th century A.D. The stroke is slightly longer in contemporary Pallava script and another variety is the broad curve enveloping the letter to the left. In the Western Cālukyan letters of the 6th century A.D. the sign in the Vākāṭaka script is repeated. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D. the leftward stroke is curved up to run right and curves up terminally. This reversed slanting 'S'-shaped sign continues in Kākatiya script; and it appears less slanting in Redḍi inscriptions.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th and 8th centuries a curve to left, terminally almost curled, before the letter, indicates this medial sound. In all the later scripts the curl becomes more definite. The development is the same in Tamil script as well.

Ai medial.—Two top horizontal strokes to left represent this (Fig. 30) in Mauryan script. In Kuṣāṇ script these are slanting to top. In 2nd century Kṣatrapa script the two horizontals to left are present.

| | | | | |
|---|---------|----------------------------|---------|---|
| - | 3 7 3 | Mauryan 3 c. B. C. | 30 | " |
| - | 2 1 3 | Kuṣāṇ 2 c. A.D. | 3 | " |
| - | 2 3 2 | Usavadāta c. A.D. | | " |
| - | 2 3 2 | Kṣātrapa 2 c. A.D. | 3 3 3 | " |
| - | 2 1 | Sātavāhana 2 c. A.D. | | " |
| - | 2 2 0 7 | Iṅgavāku 3 c. A.D. | | " |
| - | 2 2 0 7 | Pallava 3-4 c. A.D. | | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Gupta 4 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Yaśodharman 6 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Harṣavardhana 7 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Pratīhāra 9 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Paramāra 11 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Sena 12 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Vākātaka 5 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Pallava 5 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | W. Cālukya 6 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | E. Cālukya 10 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Kākatya 12 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Reddi 13 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Pallava 7 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Pallava 8 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Cola 11 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |
| - | 2 2 3 2 | Vijayanagar 15 c. A.D. | 2 2 3 2 | " |

FIG. 30.

C.S. del.

In the Gupta script the Kuṣāṇ type is continued. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions upward slanting feather-shaped stroke and the small curved stroke to left together make this sign. In Harṣavarddhana's inscriptions, of the same two strokes, the feather shaped one changes into a streamer-shaped one. In the 12th century Sena script the two signs that individually denote *e* conjointly denote *ai*.

In the Vākāṭaka inscriptions of the 5th century A.D. two small terminally-curved leftward top strokes make this sign. In Pallava script of the 5th century A.D. one terminally-curved horizontal stroke and a curve slanting downward represent it, as in *hai*, *rai*. In Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D. the form of the sign occurring in Vākāṭaka is almost repeated. In Eastern Cālukyan of the 10th century A.D. and later in Kākatiya, the reversed slanting 'S'-shaped sign above the letter, together with a horizontal stroke below, curved upwards to left, make up this medial. In the Redḍi script of the 13th century A.D. the *e* sign on top of the letter and an acute-angle-shaped sign below to the right, give the medial.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. and in the later varieties, the *e* sign is repeated one below the other, to the left, beside the letter and this is continued in all the later varieties of the script. In Tamil of the 7th century it is a double-looped curve to the left and it is so in all the later varieties.

O medial.—In Mauryan script this (Fig. 31) is composed of two strokes, making up *e* and *ā* added to the letter. To letters like *na* or *ya* it is added at the top to right and left of the vertical one slightly below and another above. In letters like *bo* they are added in the middle to left and right. But in Kuṣāṇ where the two strokes slant up and form V shape or the shape of an indistinct flying bird at a distance in a picture, the strokes are immediately on top of *ba* to form *bo*, and normally also in *to*. In the inscriptions of Uṣavadāta, as in *śo*, *go*, *bho*, etc., the two small horizontal strokes run in one line. The same two strokes continue in Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions. In Ikṣvāku inscriptions the strokes show a very slight tendency to curve and this is clear in the Pallava Prakrit inscriptions of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. In some special cases as in *jo* the curved left stroke is added to the peculiarly formed *ja* and similarly the vertical top of *la* is looped to left and the stroke continued to right to form *lo*.

In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. two curved strokes to right and left above the letter, as in *no* or *to*, ordinarily give this sign. But in some peculiar cases, like *ṛo* and *go*, it is the normal stroke to left and the peculiar sign added to *ṛa* to right and a top vertical and a curved right stroke added halfway up to the right vertical of *ga* that give this medial. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions both the simple and ornamental strokes for *e* and *ā* combine to produce this. Similarly in Harṣavarddhana's inscriptions of the 7th century A.D. One of these varieties produces a lovely horn-shaped design over the letter, as in *śo* or *ko*. In Pratiḥāra, Paramāra and Sena scripts the same principle is adopted to produce the sign. In the Paramāra inscriptions one variety shows an upward stroke to left and a vertical stroke

| | | | |
|---|---------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| — | 1 1 1 1 | Mauryan 3 c. B. C. | |
| — | 1 1 | Kuṣāṇ 2 c. A.D. | |
| — | 1 1 1 1 | Uṣavādāta c. A.D. | |
| — | 1 1 1 | Kṣatrapa 2 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 |
| — | 1 1 1 1 | Sātavāhana 2 c. A.D. | |
| — | 1 1 1 1 | Ikṣvāku 3 c. A.D. | |
| — | 1 1 1 1 | Pallava 3-4 c. A.D. | |

SAW. GANESAN
KARAIKUDI. S. I. R.

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Gupta 4 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Yaśodharman 6 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Harṣavardhana 7 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Pratihāra 9 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Paramāra 11 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Sena 12 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Vākātaka 5 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Pallava 5 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | W. Cālukya 9 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | E. Cālukya 10 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Kākatīya 12 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Reddi 13 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Pallava 7 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Pallava 8 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Cola 11 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |
| 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 | Vijayanagar 15 c. A.D. | 1 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 1 |

to right ; another shows both the strokes as verticals to right and left. The latter occurs in Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D.

The terminally-curved short horizontal strokes to left and right occur in Vākāṭaka and Pallava inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., as also in Western Cālukyan inscriptions of the next century where their curvature is greater. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century three strokes, i.e., top and right side strokes as in *yo*, left side and downward strokes as in *ro*, and double-arched top stroke as in *lo*, are to be noted. The first and third are continued in Kākatīya and Reddi inscriptions, with this modification that in the first the top stroke tends to get diminutive and the side stroke longer, while in the other the double-arch terminal curves broadly with a flourish.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the curl to left and wavy vertical above crescent to right top of letter, represent this medial and in the next century both these signs are present to left and right, but the latter of the two becomes just a straight vertical beside the letter and not on a crescent at the top. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. this vertical becomes hooked at the top which appears more angular in the Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D.

Au medial.—In the early Prakrit inscriptions this letter (Fig. 31) does not appear. But it appears in the early Sanskrit inscription of Kṣatrapa Rudradāman. It is either composed of a slanting top stroke or a horizontal stroke to left, added to the sign making up the medial *o*. Thus *sau* is *so* with the addition of a slanting top stroke. In *pau* there are three horizontal strokes, two to left and one to right. *Nau* is somewhat peculiarly formed.

In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. a top vertical is added to the double-arched sign at the top of the letter. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions these three strokes are feather-shaped to left, streamer-shaped and upward to right and comma-shaped to right level with serif. In the inscriptions of Harṣavarddhana there is a central vertical stroke between the two horn-shaped signs at the top of the letter above the serif. A vertical to right, a small horizontal to left in continuation of the serif and a top stroke make up the medial of the Pratihāra script. In Paramāra and Sena scripts of the 11th and 12th centuries respectively the verticals to right and left and the top stroke running to left produce this sign.

In the box-headed Vākāṭaka script the small curved horizontal stroke to left in continuation of the top line and a hook added above to top right of the letter produce this medial sign. It is the same in early Pallava and early Western Cālukya of the 5th and 6th centuries respectively. In the Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions of the 10th century A.D. both these signs combine and there stands distinctly above the letter the small stroke to left appearing as a hook lowered, the whole sign hence looking like two hook-heads attached to each other. In the Kākatīya script of the 12th century A.D. the hook to the left dwindles, while the one to the

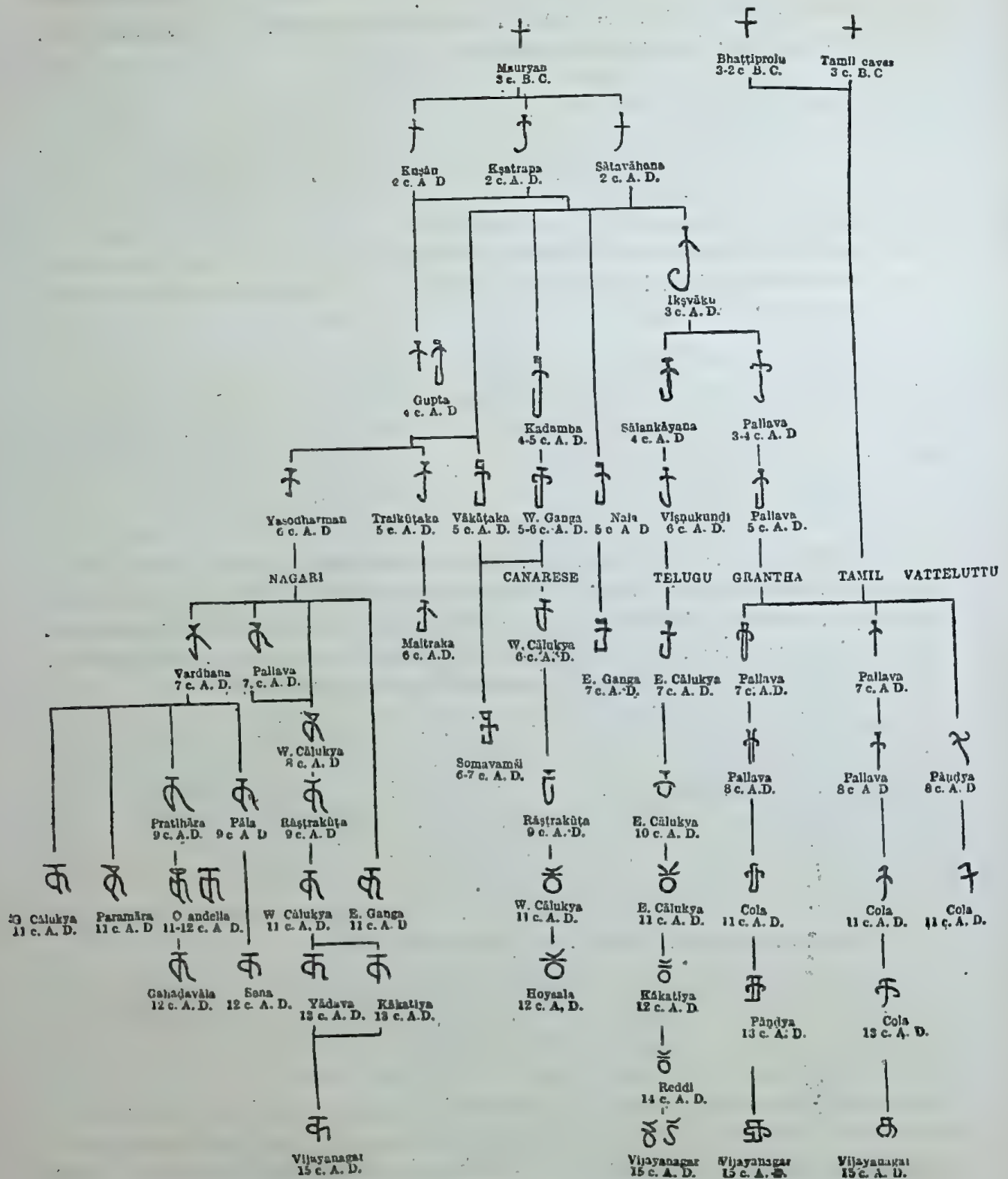


FIG. 32.

C.S. del.

right becomes larger. In the Reddi script of the next century there are two varieties of this sign ; one like medial *o* but with small sign of medial *e* repeated at the root of the long *ā* sign as in *mau* ; and another without this small sign of medial *e* separately to right top as in *tau*.

In Pallava Grantha of the 8th century A.D. this sign is almost like medial *o* except that the vertical stroke to right is double arched. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. and onwards the double arch is transferred to the top left of the vertical which is straight and is in continuation of it.

Ka.—This (Fig. 32) is a simple cross in Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu script of the same date there is an additional small top stroke to the right which in the normal script would represent elongation of the vowel element. In this letter from the Tamil caves of the same age this stroke is absent. The lower end of the vertical stroke is lengthened in Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. ; it curves slightly in the Sātavāhana and pronouncedly so in the Kṣatrapa letter. The top end is thickened and the cross stroke slightly curves in the Kṣatrapa letter. In the letter in the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D., the lower end of the vertical stroke is unusually long and curls up tremendously. The northern type of Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. shows this letter as a slight development from that of earlier Kuṣāṇ while the contemporary Central Indian Gupta variety gives a box-head to the letter and a curve and parallel upward stroke to the elongate lower end of the vertical stroke. In Kādamba inscriptions of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. the letter is similarly gracefully slender and elongate and has a box-head top, the lower end of the vertical stroke not only forming hook-shape but running up parallel half way to the main stroke. This continues in the Western Gaṅga letter of 5th, 6th centuries A.D., where however the length of the letter is diminished, the top loses the box-head but gains a serif, the cross stroke curving at either end. In Vākāṭaka inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., Somavamśī inscriptions of the 6th, 7th centuries A.D., Naḷa inscriptions of the 5th century A.D. and the Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions of the 7th century A.D., the box-head is very pronounced in the former two and less in the rest ; the lower end of the vertical stroke in all these varieties as also in the Maitraka letter of the 6th century A.D., forms sharp angles in its bend and slight parallel upward course.

In the Śāṅkayana inscriptions of the 4th century A.D., and early Prakṛt Pallava inscriptions, the letter develops a hook-shaped lower end and in the former a serif on the top. In the latter the cross stroke curves down at either end. In Viṣṇukūṇḍi and Pallava inscriptions of the 6th and 5th centuries A.D., respectively, the letter continues its hook-shaped lower end with a thickened top.

The earliest Nagari type may be recognised in Yaśodharman's inscriptions, though regular features are better observed in the 7th century A.D. The letter in the script of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions has a nail-headed serif and the lower end of the vertical shoots up a little

to form an angle, while the cross stroke flows to the right obliquely. In contemporary Pallava script the cross stroke is in continuation of the tip of the lower end of the vertical, sharply shooting up, and this continues in one form or other in all later developments. The nail head is pronounced in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D., and in the Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D.; the curve of the oblique cross stroke is pronounced in most letters thereafter though lengthened in Pratihāra inscriptions of 9th century A.D., and compressed in Candella inscriptions of 11th, 12th centuries A.D. The oblique stroke curves out slightly at the tip in Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions of the 9th century A.D., Gujrat Cālukya Paramāra, Candella, Western Cālukya, Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions of the 11th century A.D., Gāhaḍavāla inscriptions of the 12th century A.D., and Yādava inscriptions of the 13th century A.D.

In Canarese inscriptions of very early date from Western Cālukya area of the 6th century A.D., the lower parallel stroke joins the cross stroke and forms the shape of the letter which continues in the 9th century in Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions. In Western Cālukya and Hoysala inscriptions of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., respectively the form of the letter resembles contemporary Eastern Cālukya and Kākatīya letters, respectively. It has however to be noted that in the Hoysala letter the cross stroke is rather elongate.

In Eastern Cālukya inscriptions of the 7th century A.D., the letter is much the same as in Viṣṇukūṇḍi and Pallava inscriptions of the two preceding centuries, though three centuries later in inscriptions of the same dynasty the letter is rather rounded and dwarfish; the serif is pronounced, the cross stroke and the compressed hook-shaped lower end of vertical stroke together form a rectangular shape. In the next century the letter comprises three parts, the serif now changed into two strokes meeting at a point on the central cross stroke, and a circle beneath it. It continues like this in the Kākatīya and Reḍḍi inscriptions; the letter is somewhat modified and elongated in Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 15th century.

The development of the letter in Grantha and Tamil inscriptions may be seen in Pallava, Coḷa and Pāṇḍya inscriptions. In all these the vertical stroke is doubled in Grantha, while in Tamil it is a single stroke. In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., the parallel vertical strokes are joined at both ends and the cross stroke curls down on either side. This continues in Pallava inscriptions of the 8th century A.D., and the Coḷa inscriptions of the 11th century A.D., and even in the Pāṇḍyan inscriptions of the 13th century A.D., though in the last mentioned the stroke connecting the parallel vertical lines is lengthened at the bottom and curved out at top, the letter itself being compressed and made short or stunted. In the Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 15th century the letter is a modification of this Pāṇḍya type. In Tamil inscriptions of the Pallavas of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., the letter is very simple with a single elongate vertical stroke, the cross stroke and thickened top. In Coḷa inscriptions of the 11th century the thickened top develops a hook-shape. In Coḷa inscriptions of the 13th century the letter is compressed as in contemporary Grantha script but it lacks the additional

vertical stroke that we find in Grantha. In Vijayanagara script of the 15th century the lower end of the vertical stroke and one end of the cross stroke, both of them curved, combine to the left to form a letter which has not changed its form ever since. In Vaṭṭeḷuttu script of the 8th and 11th centuries, in inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyas and Coḷas respectively, the features noted in contemporary Tamil script continue, though these letters are oblique and the cross stroke curls up towards the right in the Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter of the 8th century A.D.

Kha.—This (Fig. 33) is shaped like a hook with a dot at its lower end in the Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. In contemporary Bhaṭṭiprolu script the hook lacks the dot but has a stroke added to its top right. In the Kuṣāṇ and Kātrapa scripts of the 2nd century A.D., the hook develops a large triangle at its lower part. In contemporary Sātavāhana script the hook has a stroke at the base to the right which gives it the appearance of Arabic number 2. In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D., the hook is more like a query without the dot below. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., the hook and triangle composing the letter have developed from the Kuṣāṇ script and this feature of the letter is present in inscriptions of Yaśodharman of the 6th century A.D., Traikūṭaka inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., and Maitraka inscriptions of the 6th century A.D. In Kadamba inscriptions of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., Vākāṭaka, Western Gaṅga and Nāḷa inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., the triangle is replaced by a narrow rectangle, a feature that continues in the Somavamśi inscriptions of the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. In the Pallava Prakrit inscriptions of the 3rd, 4th centuries A.D., the belly of the letter is shaped more like a triangle than a rectangle and in Śāṅkayāna script of the 4th century the letter is crescent shaped. In Viṣṇukūṇḍi inscriptions of the 6th century A.D., the letter is a hook with a stroke to the left at its base.

The earliest Nagari variety, as may be seen in the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana and the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D., is an advanced development from the hook and triangle of Yaśodharman's time. The hook itself bends double, thickens at the top end and the triangular part assumes the shape of a half leaf. The thickened top end which is bent downwards to the left has sometimes the shape of a shovel, sometimes that of a bean, and sometimes of two strokes forming a wide angle. The leaf-shaped part of the letter similarly changes its contour sometimes into that of a semi-circle against the vertical stroke to the left. The shovel-shaped stroke is present in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. and Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. The bean-shaped arm of the letter is present in Pāla script of the 9th century, Eastern Gaṅga script of the 11th century A.D. and Gāhaḍavāla script of the 12th century A.D. The arm composed of two strokes forming a wide angle is present in the letter of the Pratīhāra script of the 9th century A.D., Candella script of 11th, 12th centuries A.D., Western Cāḷukya script of the 11th century A.D., Yādava and Kākatiya scripts of the 13th century A.D. and Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. This arm is shaped like a double-bent hook in Sena script of the 12th century wherein the semi-circle or leaf-shape against the vertical stroke to right is absent. In Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D.

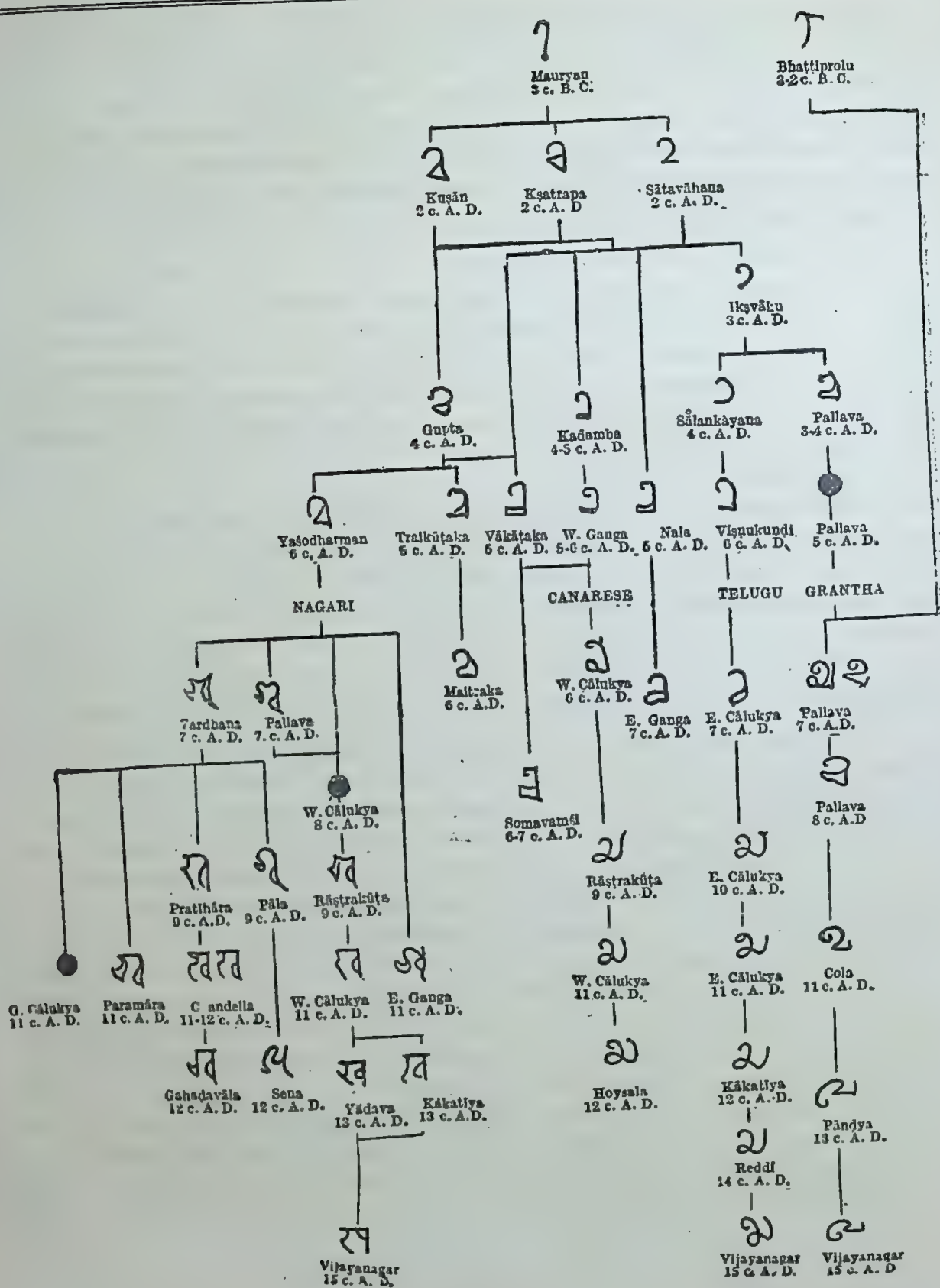


FIG. 33-

C.S. del.

this semi-circle is replaced by an oblique stroke at the top right which forms a triangle with the vertical and top strokes.

In Canarese inscriptions of very early date from Western Cālukyan area of the 6th century A.D. the letter is more or less like that in Western Ganga script of about that time, except that the narrow rectangular belly is transformed into a loop. Further development of this letter in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D., Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. and Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D. is a hook which forms a loop and continues an additional upward stroke with a flourish.

The hook and loop in the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. representing this letter change in the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D. and become almost like the Rāṣṭrakūṭa or Western Cālukyan letter of about the same time, the upward side stroke having a serif-like thickened top end. The letter in Kākatīya, Redḍi and Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 12th, 14th and 15th centuries respectively continues in almost the same form.

In Grantha script of the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties, the hook with loop and upward side stroke and the hook with strokes almost forming a triangle. In the next century the letter in Pallava script is a hook with triangular belly. In Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. the hook is shaped more like the coil, and the triangular part opens out somewhat, as one of its sides does not actually join another. In Pāṇḍyan and Vijayanagara script of the 13th and 15th centuries A.D. the hook expands downwards into an elongate curl and the triangle opens out more.

Ga.—In Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. two strokes meeting at the top compose this (Fig. 34) letter which looks like the letter V inverted. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script this letter has an additional top stroke to the right which in ordinary script of the time represents elongation of the vowel element. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. and Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D. the letter is more or less horse-shoe shaped. In the northern variety of the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. a small base stroke is added to the arm of the horse-shoe to the left while the arm is elongated downwards to the right; in the southern variety of Gupta script the arm of the letter is curved inwards to the left and the top flattened a bit. While in Traikūṭaka script of the 5th century A.D. the horse-shoe shape still appears without change, a box-head appears above the flattened top of the letter in Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi inscriptions of the 5th and 6th—7th centuries respectively, the flattened top of the letter being marked by a small thicker stroke in all the other letters of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., like Kadamba, Śālanakāyana, Pallava, Western Ganga, Naḷa, Viśnukundi. It continues so in Maitraka script of the 6th century A.D. and Eastern Ganga of the 7th century A.D.

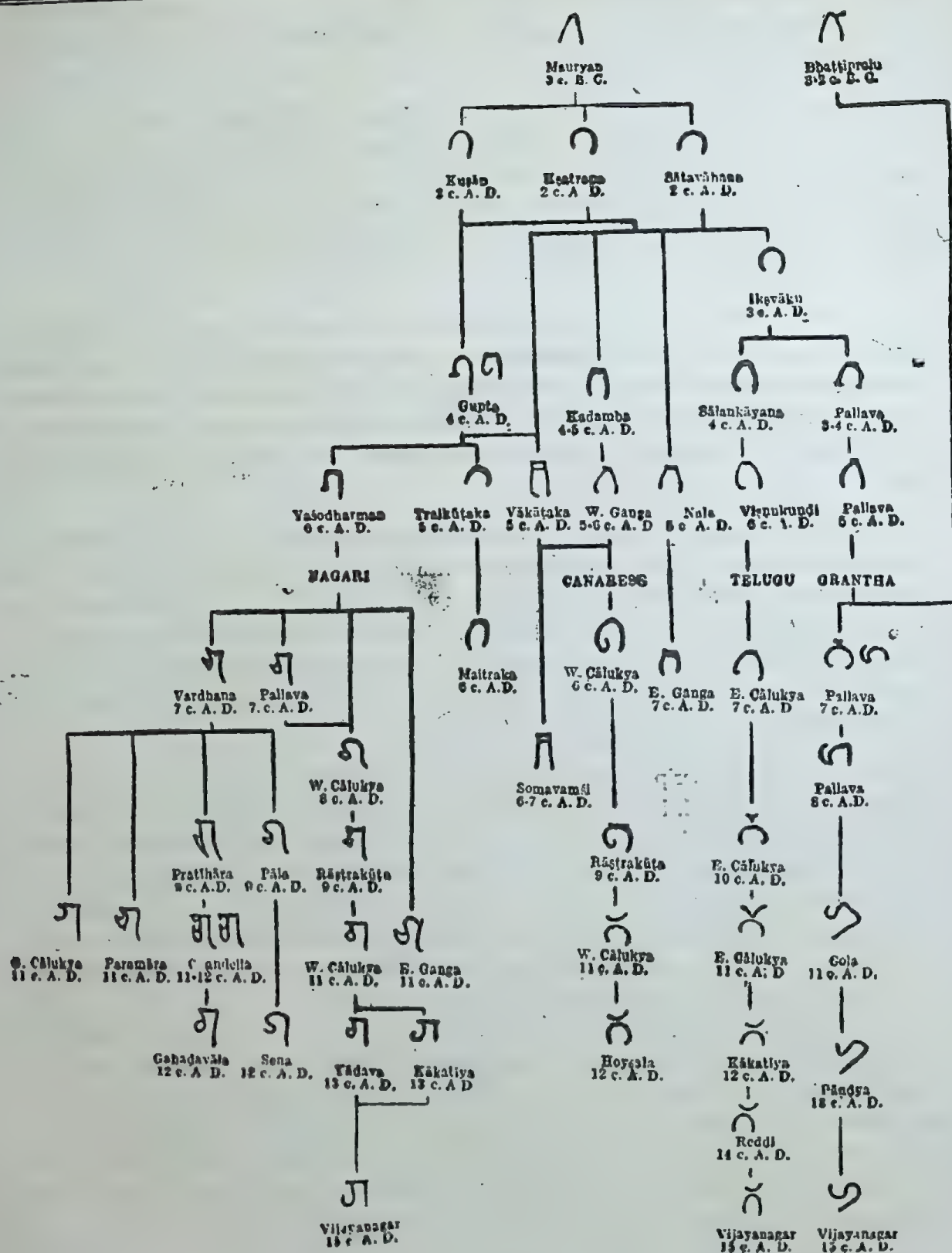


FIG. 34.

The letter of Yaśodharman's time is a development from the northern variety of the Gupta script, but in the regular Nagari of the seventh century A.D., as seen in the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana and the Pallavas, the flattened top, the straightened right arm and the left arm with pointed loop end show considerable advance in its development. The flattened top of the letter continues in all letters of the Nagari variety, except in Western Cālukyan of the 8th century A.D., Pāla of the 9th century A.D., Eastern Ganga of the 11th century A.D. and Sena of the 12th century A.D. The left arm of the letter is leaf-shaped in Pratihāra script of the 9th century; triangularly curved resembling a shovel in Rāṣtrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. and Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D.; has a bean-shaped tip in Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D., Pāla of the 9th century A.D., Candella of the 11th—12th centuries A.D. and Eastern Ganga of the 11th century A.D. This arm ends in a small circle in Western Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D., Gāhaḍavala of the 12th century A.D., Yādava of the 13th century A.D. while it curves out without actually forming a circle in Kākatīya and Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 13th and 15th centuries respectively. In all these the right stroke is usually straight or slightly slanting to right.

In early Canarese inscriptions from Western Cālukyan area of the 6th century the letter is horse-shoe shaped with the left arm curving inwards. In addition to this feature in the compressed dwarfish letter of the Rāṣtrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. a light serif stroke is added on top, which later, in the Western Cālukyan and Hoysāla script of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., curves up like a crescent. In the two latter scripts the inward curve of the left arm is absent.

The horse-shoe shape with slightly flattened top of this letter in the Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions of the 7th century A.D. has a separate nail-head serif added above it in the same script of the 10th century A.D. This serif shoots up into two divergent strokes in the next century and looks like the letter V above U inverted. In Kākatīya, Redḍi and Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 12th, 14th and 15th centuries A.D. respectively, this is changed into a crescent above the horse-shoe.

In Grantha script of the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D. the letter with serif is somewhat like the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D. Another variety of the same time lacks a serif but adds to itself an additional upward-curved stroke to the left. In the Pallava script of the 8th century A.D. the arm of the letter is vertical to the right while the additional curved stroke to the left is present, the serif is absent, and from now onwards there is no serif for the letter in the subsequent centuries. The shape arising from the addition of the curved stroke to the left is modified in the letter of Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. to form a hook-shape and the arm to right runs downwards to right and again to left obliquely. This form of the letter continues in Pāṇḍya script of the 13th century A.D., though in the Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. the angularities are softened into curves.

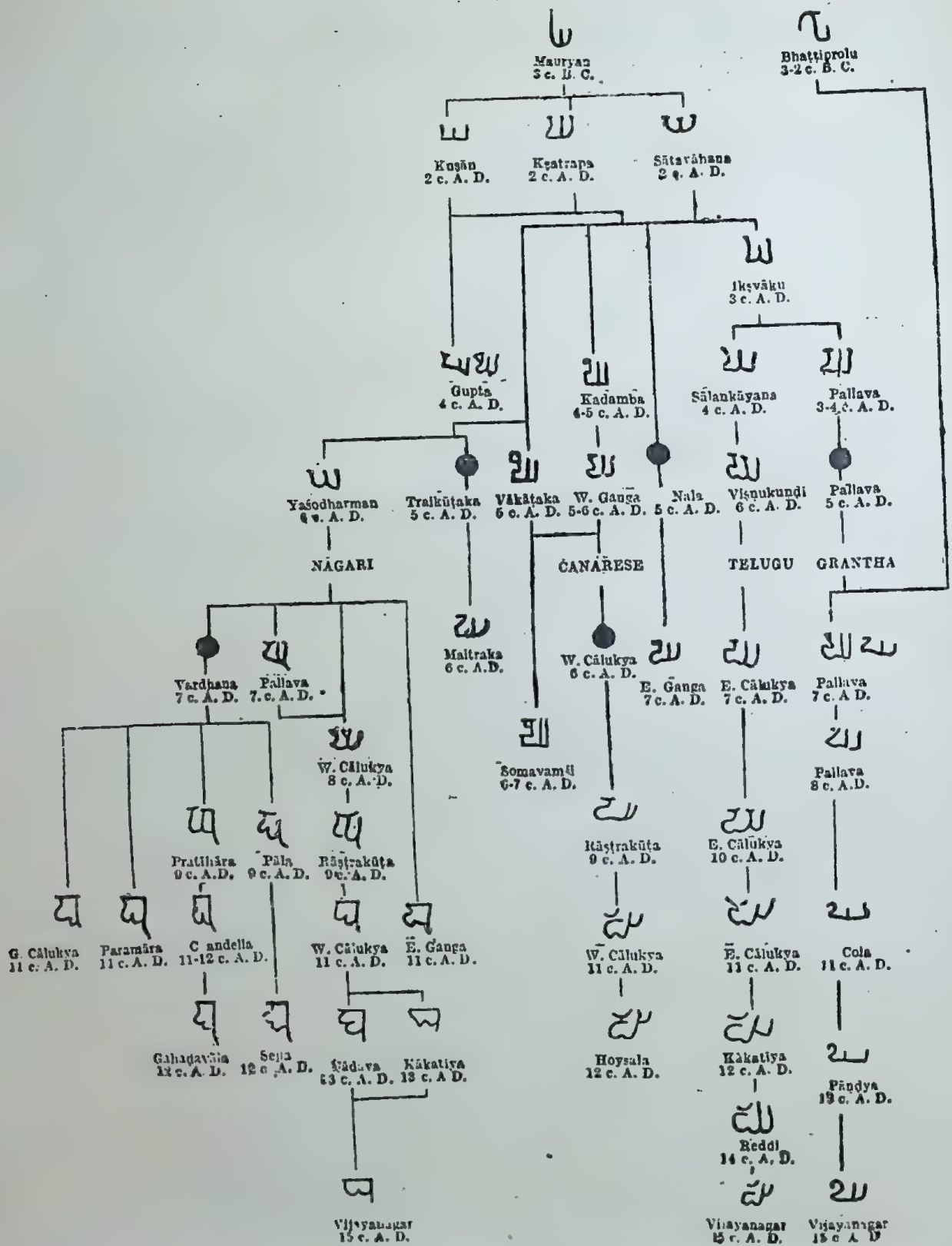


FIG. 35.

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Gha.—In Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. this (Fig. 35) letter is shaped somewhat like a fishing hook with a central stroke which gives it three prongs, the one to the extreme left being elongate. In Bhattiprolu script of the same time it is shaped like an oblique reversed S with a stroke to the top right. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters of the 2nd century A.D. it is three pronged. In the first and last the middle prong is smaller while in the Kṣatrapa letter all the prongs are of equal length. In the Kuṣāṇ letter the semi-circular base gets flattened and the whole letter looks like E lying on its vertical stroke. In the Kṣatrapa letter the stroke to the extreme left has a small undulation while the Sātavāhana letter is still a semi-circle with central stroke. The strokes in Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters are thickened somewhat at the top. In the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D., the prongs are elongate. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the bottom line is slightly oblique, the central stroke somewhat to the right and the stroke to the left thickened at its top. In the Central Indian variety of the same script the letter is of trident shape with a triangular nail-head for the left prong. In the script of Yaśodharman's time the letter is more like W, but in inscriptions of the Kadambas of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., of the Śālikāyānas of the 4th century A.D., of the Pallavas of the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., of the Vākāṭakas of the 5th century A.D., of the Western Gangas of the 5th-6th centuries A.D., Maitrakas of the 6th century A.D., Somavamsis of 6th-7th centuries A.D., Eastern Gangas of the 7th century A.D. and Viṣṇukūṇḍins of the 6th century A.D., the trident shape of the letter with somewhat elongate arms in many cases continues with the left prong, bulging out somewhat and receding again to take an upward course before finally getting thickened at the top or developing a serif or wearing a box-head.

In early Nagari of the 7th century A.D. the three prongs of the letter continue, a serif is added to the top of the bulging left stroke and the stroke to the right runs down a little to form the usual lower stroke so common in most Nagari letters. In Western Cālukyan Nagari script of the 8th century A.D. the prongs have a triangular nail-head at the top. In Pratihara, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. the prongs are still clear, the serif becomes larger and the downward stroke is prominent. In all later varieties of Nagari the serif is changed into a full top stroke, the right prong into an elongate side stroke, the central stroke dwindling and the left stroke bulging out and receding in to form the contour of a crude animal head.

In early Canarese inscriptions of the Western Cālukyan area the letter is developed from the Western Ganga letter of the 5th-6th centuries A.D. and in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century the bulge of the left prong is very prominent, the letter itself being broad and short. In Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century the serif changes into a small crescent and the link between this and the bulging arm of the letter to the left is lost. This bulging arm to left takes a double bend at the base and the right arm perches itself towards the top end of the central arm which is the only one prominent in the letter of the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala scripts of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. respectively.

The Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. is not very different from the earlier Viṣṇukunḍi letter and the serif is rather more prominent in the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D., the letter itself being rather broad. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D., the letter is somewhat like that of contemporary Western Cālukyan but the crescent serif is here a double stroke shaped like V. In the Kākatīya and Vijayanagara scripts of the 12th and 15th centuries A.D. the letter is just like the one in Hoysala script of the 12th century, though in Redḍi script of the 14th century A.D. the right prong issues from the base and is as long as the middle one.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century the letter is not very different from that of earlier Viṣṇukunḍin or contemporary Eastern Cālukyan. This shape almost continues to be so in the next century, though in Coḷa, Pāṇḍya and Vijayanagara scripts of the 11th, 13th and 15th centuries A.D., respectively the letter is rather broad with a straight baseline, two strokes for the central and right arms, the left arm being shaped like a query without the dot.

Na.—In the Mauryan alphabet this letter (Fig. 36) is practically a square with the right side open. It is practically the same in the Kuṣan inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., the northern form of the letter follows the Kuṣan type but the southern variety shows a small inward dip in the vertical and a small downward projection of the tip of the top stroke to right. This is repeated in Kadamba script of the 4th and 5th century A.D. The letter is nearly similar in Śāṅkayana script of the 4th century A.D., Western Ganga (5th century A.D.) and Viṣṇukunḍin of the same time. The early form of the letter is maintained in Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.), and Maitraka (6th century A.D.) alphabet as also in Eastern Ganga (7th century A.D.).

The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions (6th century A.D.) is developed in the next century by emphasis on the dip both in the vertical and the base which continues in later forms. In Eastern Ganga (11th century A.D.) and Sena (12th century A.D.), Nagari inscriptions the letter shows a circlet to the right top.

The Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D., gives a clue to understanding the later development of the letter in Telugu script. The development is much as in *ja* as the dip in the vertical forming curves at the top and the base decide the form of the letter.

In Pallava Grantha letter of the 8th century A.D., the vertical stroke is lost by the intrusion of a diagonal stroke which continues thereafter to connect the top and base of the letter.

In Tamil the projection of the left end of the base and the curves of the vertical stroke already observed in the 7th century Pallava script form the basis for a series of transformations that finally settled the letter in the Coḷa and Vijayanagar inscriptions.

The Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter follows the form of the Tamil letter.

Ca.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 37) is a semi-circle, with the vertical stroke double its diameter to the right, giving the letter the appearance of a reversed P upside down. In contemporary script from the Tamil caves it is similar, but in Bhaṭṭiprolu script the vertical stroke slightly projects downwards and a stroke is added to top right which in ordinary script would signify lengthening of the vowel element *a*. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sāta-vāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D. the belly of the letter bulges forward to assume the shape of an orange cell, the vertical stroke dwindles, a small thick knob towards the right top being all that is left of its whole length. In the Kuṣāṇ letter the knob is more or less a serif stroke. In Ik-vāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the letter looks more compressed. The Northern variety of Gupta letter of the 4th century is like the earlier Kuṣāṇ one, while the Central Indian type of letter shows a box-head. In Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Somavamśi, Nala and Eastern Ganga scripts of the 4th, 5th, 6th—7th, 5th and 7th centuries A.D. respectively the belly of the letter is more or less rectangular and the box-head clearly crowns the vertical stroke that again rises up. In Śālikāyana, Western Ganga and Viṣṇukunḍi letters of the 4th, 5th—6th and 6th centuries A.D. respectively, the serif to the left is clearly marked and in all these, as also in the Pallava letter of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., the base line undulates to form a double-curve. The Traikūṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. is somewhat shaped like a triangle, with a serif stroke to the right top, the Maitraka letter of the next century showing the triangle curving up to form orange cell shape. In the script of Yaśodharman of the 6th century A.D. the letter resembles a spouted pitcher facing left. In the early Nagari letter, as in Harṣavarddhana's inscriptions, the letter is derived from that of Yaśodharman's, the belly merging into the spout. In Pallava Nagari of the same time the belly of the letter is just half an orange cell, the vertical stroke appears again and slightly projects downwards, its top thickening into a nail-head. This nail-head is very prominent in the Western Cālukyan Nagari letter of the 8th century A.D. and Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. The letter in Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D. is almost like that of early Pallava script. The orange cell shape of the belly of the letter occurs in Eastern Ganga script of 11th century A.D. and Gāhaḍavāla script of the 12th century A.D. But in late Western Cālukyan (11th century A.D.), Gujrat Cālukyan (11th century A.D.), Sena (12th century A.D.), Yādava and Kākatiya scripts (13th century A.D.), the serif becomes a full top stroke, and the belly of the letter seen against the vertical stroke is a triangle.

In early Canarese script of the 6th century A.D. from Western Cālukyan area the letter is more or less like that of Western Ganga script of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. In Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. the base line undulates to form a double curve and a serif is present. The Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. shows the serif changed into two strokes branching off to form an angle, the base line undulating to form a double curve and the belly opening near the serif stroke and a small upward beak-like

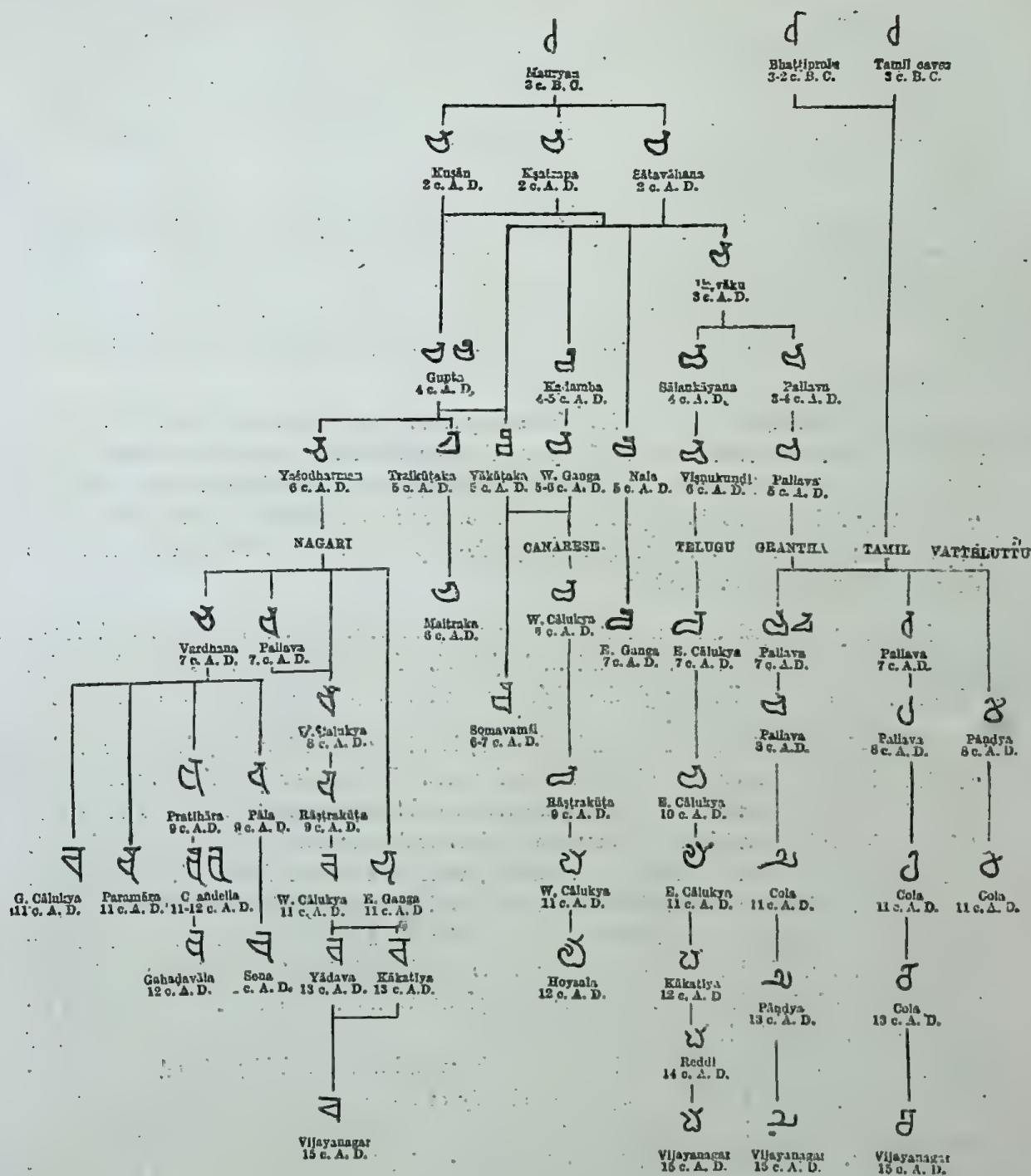


FIG. 37.

C.S. del.

stroke to right gives the letter almost the shape of a kettle. This is the shape of the letter in Hoysala script of the next century.

This shape continues in all the varieties of Telugu script from this time onwards but the serif strokes so prominent in the 11th century A.D. soften into crescent shape from the 15th century onwards.

In Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the letter is much as in earlier Pallava script of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. The thickened serif-like top is slightly forked in one type and the belly somewhat bulges up more to the left. The shape of the belly is somewhat like a triangle in the 8th century A.D. and from the 11th century A.D. the letter is composed of a curl that stands against the base line which has a slight curvature and a short vertical to the right.

In Tamil the Pallava letter of the 7th century A.D. is like the Aśokan letter with a small thick top knob. In the 8th century the knob disappears and the belly opens a little. In the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D. a small stroke appears in the place of the knob of the 7th century A.D. This develops in the 10th century into T shape and the opened belly joins again; later in the Vijayanagara script the top stroke of the T-shaped part shoots down and cuts an angle to the left.

In Pāṇḍyan Vatteluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter is oblique and looks a *svastika* with the left and downward stroke joined. It is much the same in Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. though the slight topward curve of the right stroke is absent.

Cha.—In the Mauryan script this (Fig. 38) is a long vertical stroke, the lower half of which divides an oval or ellipse into two equal parts. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script as usual a top stroke is added to the right. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Śātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the letter is dwarfish and the two cells of its oval belly develop into two closely-knit spheroids with a central vertical stroke above, with its top end thickened. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the letter is composed of an elongate oval to left crowned by a small crescent closely connected with an oval or ellipse. In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. from Central India a box-head crowns the small vertical which is slightly to the left. In the letter of Yaśodharman's time the two spheroids are a little apart but connected by the central stroke which has a thick serif-like top. The letter in all the early scripts of South India and Deccan, like Kadamba, Śāṅkayana, Pallava and Viṣṇukunḍin, and early Western and Eastern Cālukyan, is composed only of these two spheroids, now shaped like pears, the top of the left one among them being a little more pointed and raised than the other. The early Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D. in Pallava inscriptions is not very different from the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions. From this time onwards the letter is more or less a circle or ellipse laid on its back divided into two equal halves by a straight

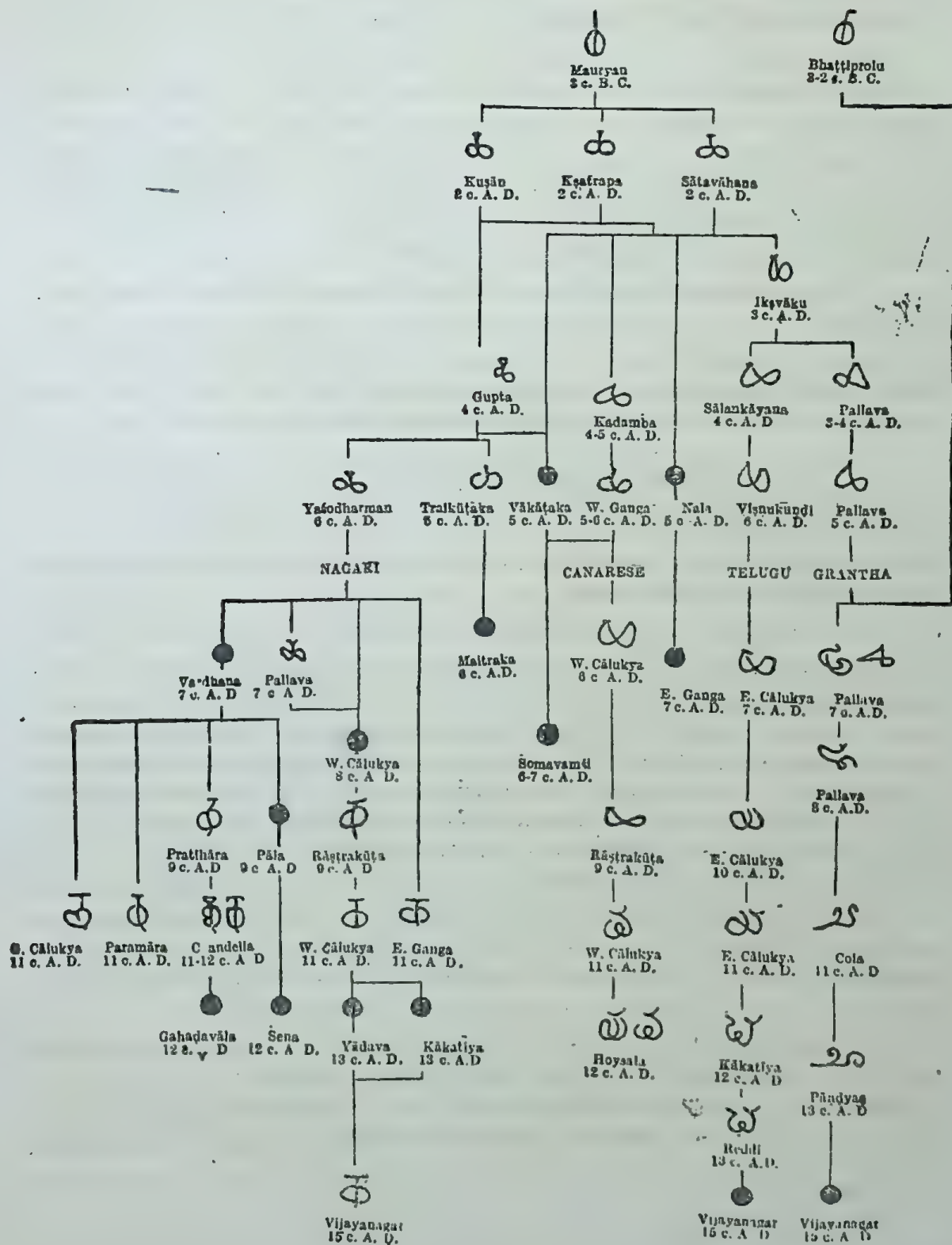


FIG. 38.

C.S. del.

or slightly curvilinear vertical stroke with a top serif and in some cases small downward projection.

In early Canarese script from Western Cālukyan area the two pear-shaped parts, composing the letter in the 6th century Cālukyan script, get flattened out in the Rāstrakūṭa letter in the 9th century A.D. ; but in the 11th century Western Cālukyan script it becomes an almost circular form like two coils of a spring forming a central loop, the right end being surmounted by a small arch-shaped serif. This and a modified form of the earliest Western Cālukyan letter occur in Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D.

In the earliest Eastern Cālukyan script the letter resembles its Western contemporary. But in the 10th century one of the pear-shaped cells opens at the top end and in the next century an arch-shaped serif is added to the top of the arm to the right. The letter in the Kākatīya and Reḍḍi scripts of the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. is more or less akin to that in Western Cālukyan and Hoysala script of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D.

In the Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties, both based on the earlier Pallava type of the 5th century A.D. In the 8th century A.D. one of the spheroids dwindles and the other opens out. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. and onwards the letter is like unaspirated *ca* with the arm to the right, at first curving out slightly but later curving out strongly.

Ja.—In Mauryan script this (Fig. 39) is like the letter E. The central stroke is lengthened in the Bhaṭṭiprolu letter of the same date. The spine of the letter is sometimes straight and sometimes curved in all these varieties during the first few centuries of the Christian era. In the Central Indian variety of Gupta script, Kadamba, Śālāṅkāyana, Pallava, Western Ganga, Nāla and Viṣṇukunḍin scripts of the 4th, 5th, 6th centuries A.D. the top and bottom strokes undulate to form slight double curve. In the Vākāṭaka script of the 5th century A.D. the vertical stroke recedes inwards above the second stroke and adds a box-head to its top left. In Somavamśi script of the 6th, 7th centuries A.D. the box-head is not present. In the letter of Yaśodharman's time the two lower strokes tend to be oblique ; and in the Nagari script of Harṣavarddhana's time the short vertical recedes inside above the middle stroke, both the middle and lower strokes running down obliquely, the latter even curving a bit to left ; the top stroke thickens a bit at its ends and drops down a little to the right.

In the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D. and Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. the top and vertical strokes combine to change into a triangle above the middle stroke. In all further developments except in Sena and Vijayanagar scripts the middle stroke runs down obliquely or very nearly straight and down in cursive manner, the other stroke strongly curving in and out again ; and with the serif on vertical stroke

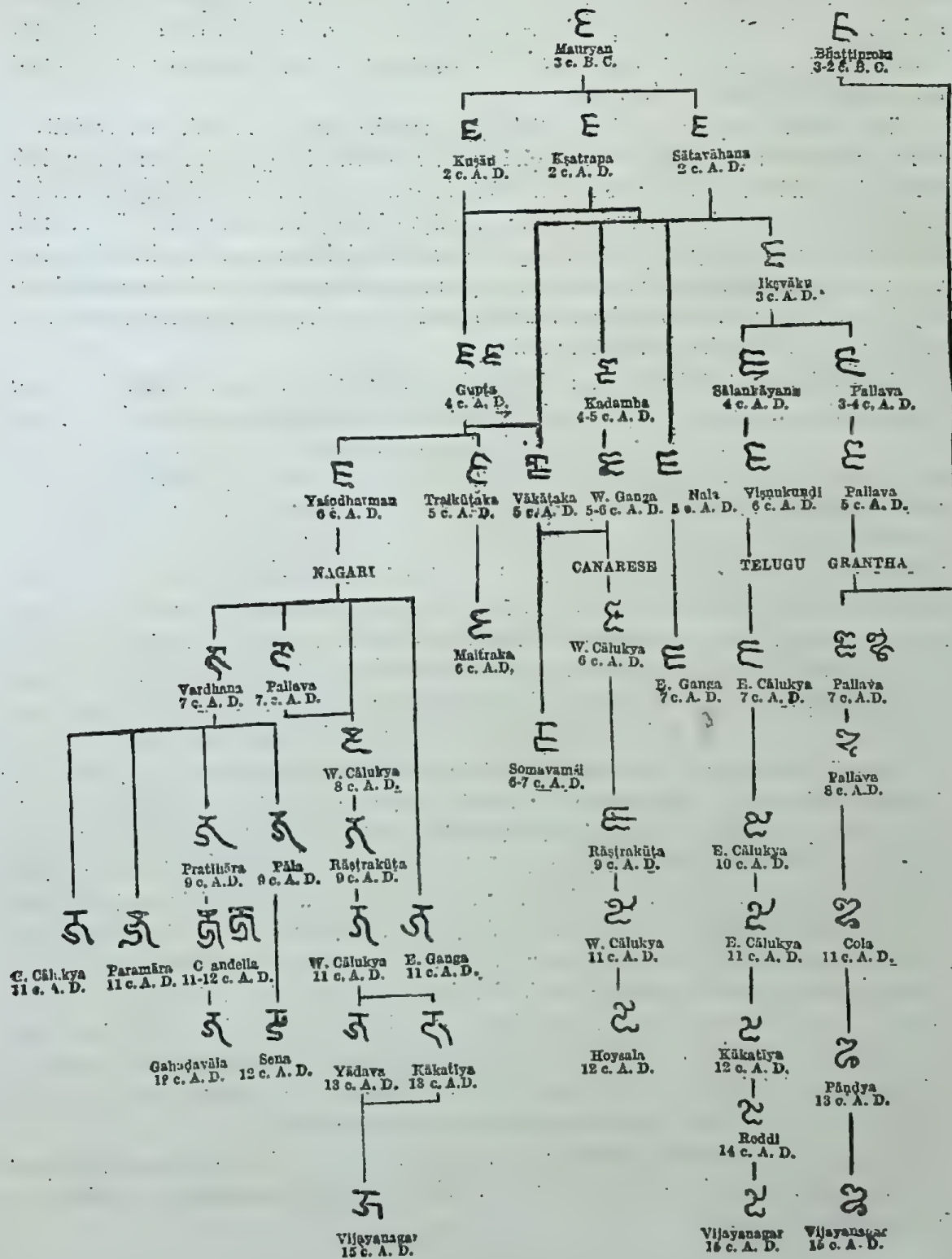


FIG. 39.

(S. del.)

above the middle stroke the letter looks like T on S with the top end of the letter lengthened downwards. In Sena script of the 12th century A.D. the middle line is not oblique but curves up to right towards the serif. In Vijayanagara script the middle stroke bends and runs down to form a right angle.

In Canarese script from Western Cālukyan area the letter of the 6th century A.D. is not very different from that of the slightly earlier Western Ganga script but a tiny dash across the middle stroke may be noted. This later accounts for the curl-shape to the left of the top stroke of the letter in Rāstrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan script the top line breaks and forms a curl to the left and an upward curve to the right, the central stroke just connecting this part with the stroke forming the base that undulates to form a double bend. This shape of the letter continues in the Hoysāla script of the 12th century A.D.

In the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. the letter is after the earlier Viṣṇukunḍin variety. But in the 10th century A.D. the letter is more like the Western Cālukyan in the next century, with this difference that the curl to the left actually forms a loop and the top end of the curve to the right thickens serif-like. From the 11th century onwards the letter is about the same type as in Western Cālukyan and Hoysāla scripts.

In the Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties of the letter. In the first the top stroke starts with a curl and this along with the other two strokes is wavy, forming a double arch, as in earlier examples. In the other one the top stroke starts with a curl, has a double bend, and then obliquely runs down to the left and again to right, forms a loop and a curve in continuation. From this the Pallava letter of the next century is formed. In Coḷā script of the 11th century A.D. and later the letter is only a continuation of this type with the additional curve beyond the loop being absent.

Ña.—In the Mauryan alphabet the letter (Fig. 40) is like the letter H with the left vertical extended a little to left horizontally and the right vertical with its upper half omitted. In the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters of the 2nd century A.D. the lower end of the left vertical stroke is somewhat prolonged. It is abnormally prolonged and definitely curves to left in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D., and the limb to the right tends to curve. This continues in the early Pallava letter of the 3rd and 4th century A.D. In the Kadamba and Śāṅkayāṇ letters of the 4th century A.D., the horizontal top stroke in continuation of the left vertical develops a double bend. In the former the lower end of the prolonged vertical curves and shoots up as a parallel stroke. The right limb of the letter from now onwards curves and tends to be hook-shaped as in Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.), Maitraka (6th century), Viṣṇukunḍi (6th century A.D.), Pallava (5th century A.D.), Eastern Ganga (7th century A.D.) and Eastern Cālukya (7th century A.D.).

In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the letter is a simple one lacking the loop of Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. and later in the inscriptions of Yāśodharman the form is continued.

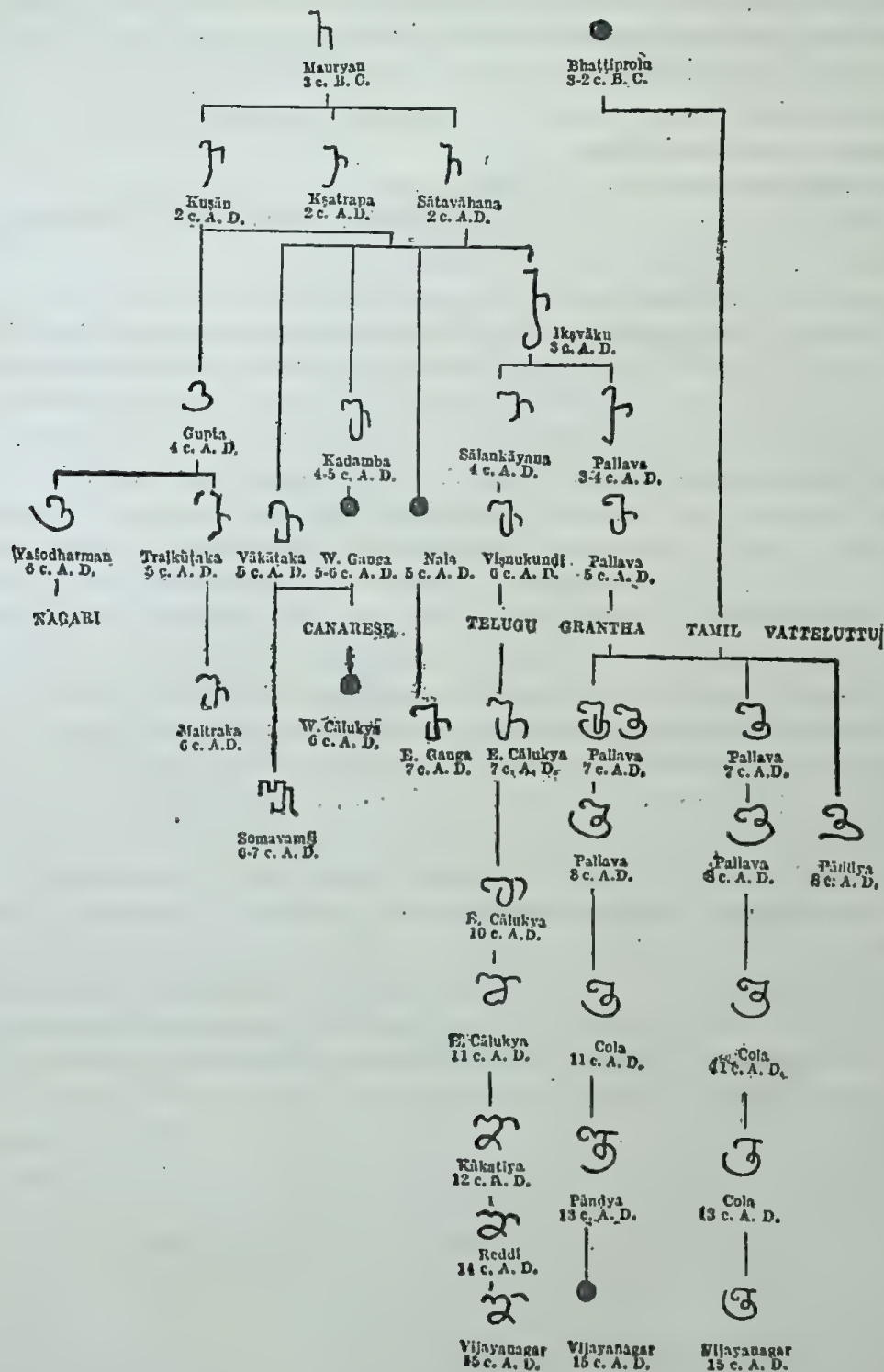


FIG. 40.

C.S. del.

In the Telugu area the parallel stroke in continuation of the vertical tends to bulge into a loop as in the letter *i* of the same alphabet in different stages and the hook-shaped right limb gets diminished into a small projecting arc.

In the Grantha script the loop is formed in the 7th century A.D. itself and the right limb starts in continuation of the loop as a curve with a flourish encircling the loop, a shape continuing during later centuries.

The letter is the same in Tamil script as well. The Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter is formed after the Tamil one.

Ta.—From the Mauryan times to practically about the 4th century A.D. this letter (Fig. 41) is a semi-circle shaped like 'C'. From the 4th century A.D. there is slight change. In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the top of the letter is a horizontal stroke. This is found also in Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Śāṅkāyana, Nala and Pallava scripts of the 4th, 5th centuries A.D. though in Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi script of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D. respectively a box-head is added. The base of the letter is somewhat straightened and a small undulation gives it a shallow double curve in Śāṅkāyana, Western Ganga, Viṣṇukunḍin and Pallava letters of the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries A.D. In the script of Yaśodharman the top end of the letter has a distinct dot. In the Nagari script of Harṣavarddhana's time the top end of the letter raises itself up and touches the serif added to it, thus giving the contour of half a pot. In nearly all the later forms this appearance continues almost unchanged; the Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. however has a triangular nail-head instead of the mere top stroke; and in Pāla, Eastern Ganga and Sena scripts of the 9th, 11th and 12th centuries respectively the back of the letter has a double bend.

The early Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. resembles the earlier Kadamba letter and the Rāṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. has a shallow double bend in the base line. This feature continues in the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala letters of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., respectively; and in addition the top end of the letter is prolonged to shoot up.

In Eastern Cālukyan script the letter of the 7th century A.D. is after the earlier type and like its earliest Western Cālukyan cousin. But in the 10th century A.D. the top end shoots up into a prominent vertical stroke. In the subsequent centuries this letter of the Telugu script continues both the top vertical stroke and the double curve of the base line.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D., one form of the letter is the simple C-shaped one and another like 'L' upside down and oblique or a hockey-stick placed handle downwards in slanting fashion. In the next century the lower end of the letter is bent and curved to form a small hook. This hook is enlarged in the 11th century Coḷa and 13th century Pāṇḍya letter which resembles S written slanting with definite angularities. In the Vijayanagar letter of the 15th century A.D., the letter is simplified into a downward stroke just slanting to left, then to right and again to left.

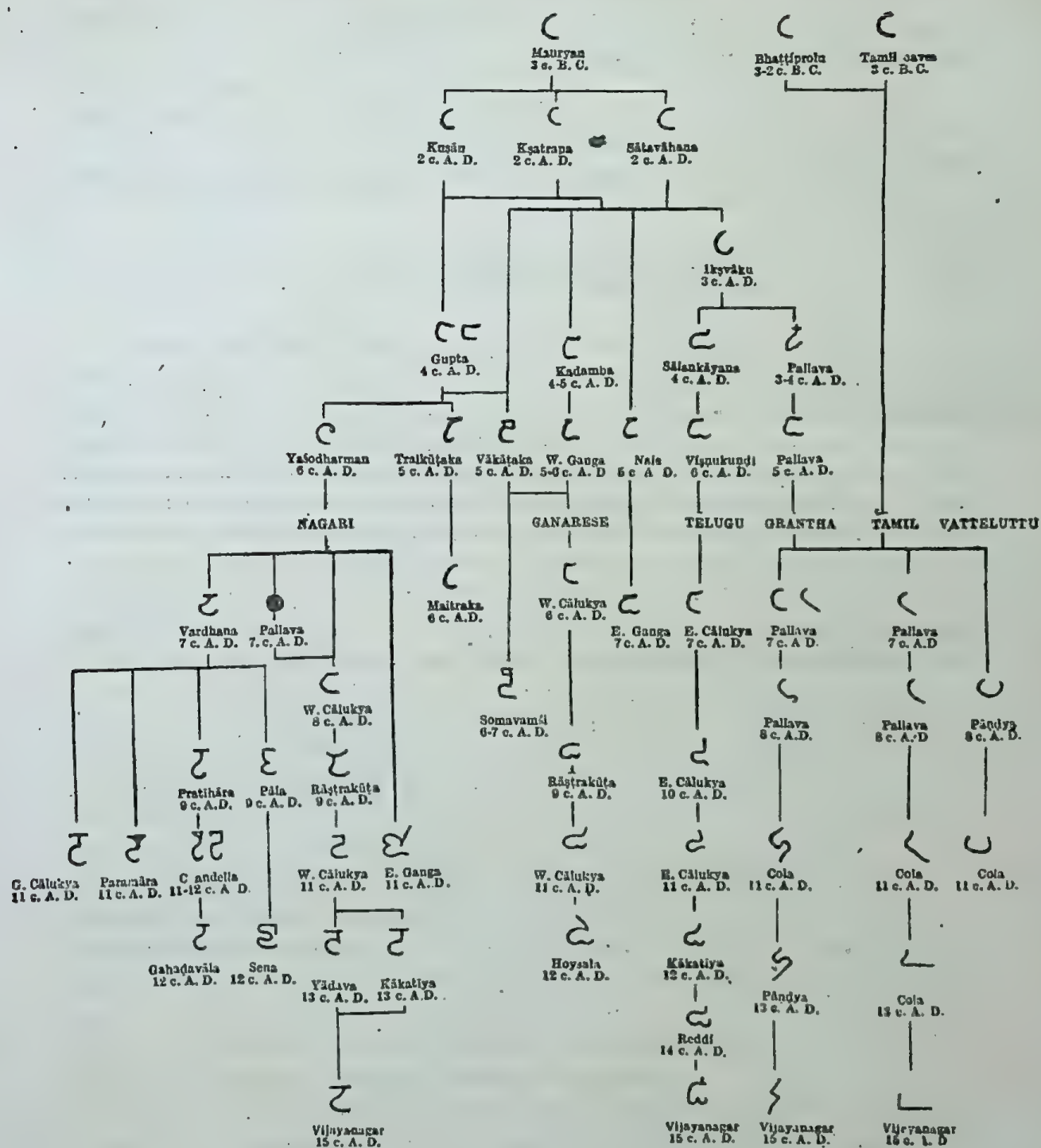


FIG. 41.

C.S. det.

The early Pallava Tamil letter of the 7th century A.D., is akin to contemporary Grantha letter composed of a stroke running aslant from right to left and again from left to right, with the angle rounded a bit. This form continues till the 11th-12th centuries but in the 13th century Coḷa script the lower part of the stroke running from left to right lifts itself up to form a straight horizontal line and later in the Vijayanagar letter of the 15th century A.D., the other stroke also straightens itself into a vertical and the letter consists of two sides of a rectangle forming a right angle.

The Vaṭṭeluttu letter in Pāṇḍya script of the 8th century A.D., is more or less a crescent and in the 11th century Coḷa script it continues the same form except that its base is somewhat flattened.

Da.—In Mauryan script the letter (Fig. 42) looks like H with the top and bottom half of the arms to left and right respectively rubbed out. In the Kuṣāṇ, Ksatrapa and Sāta-vāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D., it is shaped like a sickle with handle upwards; a small serif crowns the Kuṣāṇ letter. In the Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D., the top is thickened wedgelike. In the Gupta letter of the 4th century A.D., which is developed from the earlier Kuṣāṇ one the curved lower part straightens itself somewhat vertically. In the Kadamba, Vākaṭāka and Somavamśi scripts of the 4th, 5th and 6th-7th centuries, respectively, the letter develops a box-head. In these, as well as in the Śāṅkayana, Pallava Viṣṇukūṇḍin, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Western Cālukya and Eastern Ganga scripts of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 5th, 6th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D., respectively, the letter though still sickle-shaped has the curved blade-shaped base, slightly 'double bent' and wavy. In Yaśodharman's script the letter is shaped somewhat like the numeral 3 with the top line flattened slightly and in the Nagari of Harṣavardhana's time the top stroke is clearly a serif. In the 9th century Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts the letter is more or less like that in Vardhana script but from the 11th century A.D. the letter in Nagari is more or less an 'S' with the top end continued up vertically a little and then horizontally to left. In the Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. this stroke above the 'S'-shaped part is marked like a nail-head.

In early Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D. the letter is still sickle-shaped but the base tends to develop a wavy contour, which persists in the successive centuries, till in the Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D. the wavy line curls towards the right end; the connected serif changes into a separate small crescent above the letter from the 11th century onwards.

In the Eastern Cālukyan script the development is like that in Western Cālukyan but in the 11th century A.D. the serif is composed of two strokes shaped like 'V' rather widened, but from the 12th century onwards the crescent takes its place.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. the letter is like the numeral 2 with the horizontal stroke lengthened. In the same script of the next century a dot, a stroke

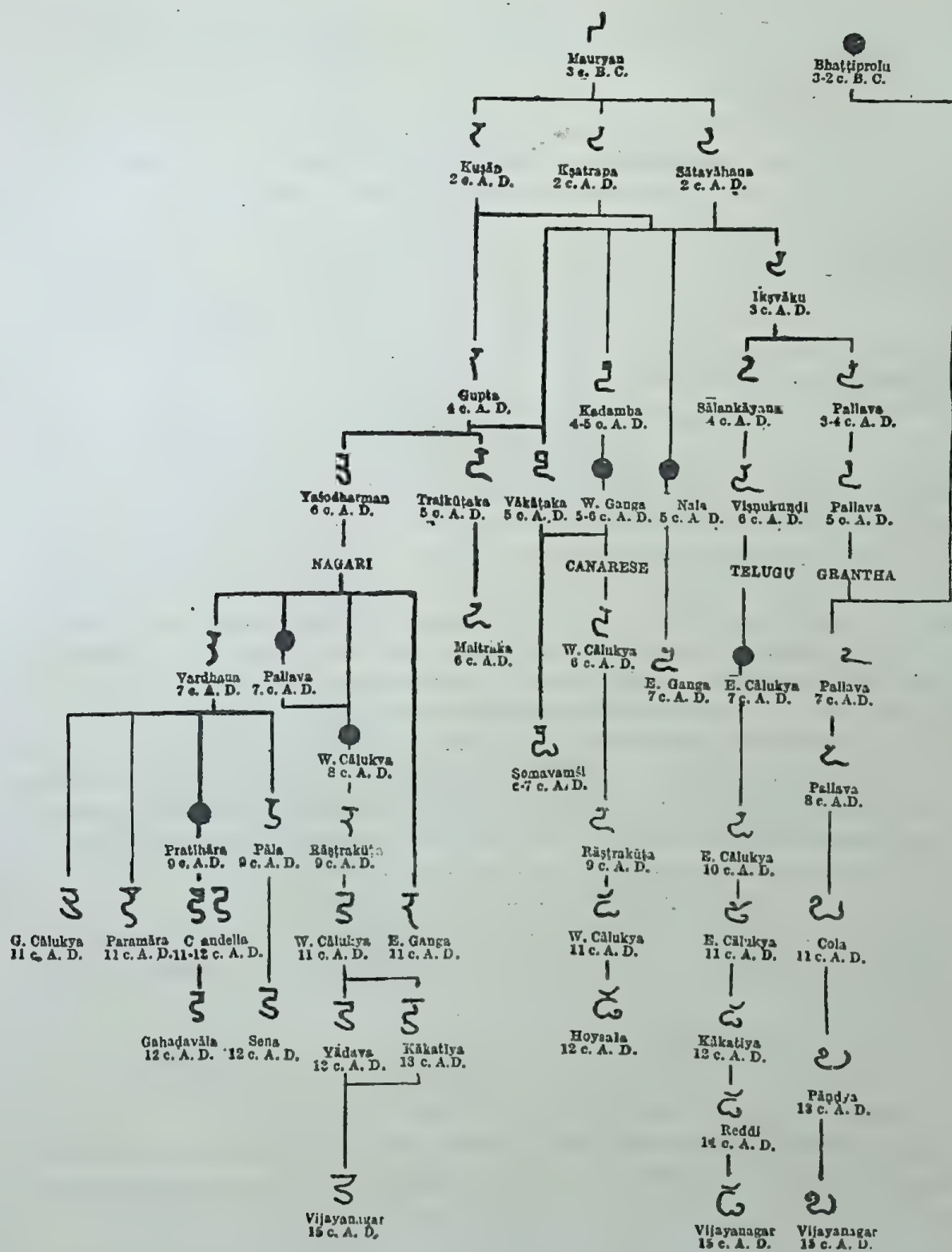


FIG. 42.

C.S. del.

slanting down from right to left and continued as wavy base line, compose the letter. In the 11th century Coḷa script the dot and slanting strokes combine to look like a hook and the wavy line in continuation is very deep showing a clear double arch which ends as a vertical stroke. From this time onwards the form of the letter is more or less of this type.

Dha.—In the Mauryan script this letter (Fig. 43) is shaped as an inverted question mark without the dot. The base is flattened and the top end somewhat thicker in the 2nd century Kuṣāṇ and Kṣatrapa and Sātāvāhanā letters. In the southern variety of Gupta script the base curves in as also in Kadamba (4th and 5th century A.D.) and there is a tendency for the right end of the letter to curl which is more pronounced in later letter of the Canarese, Telugu and Grantha scripts; the letter is mainly in these areas very like *ḍa* in the different periods with the addition of the loop through the Vijayanagar Telugu letter has also a stroke added below it.

The letter in the Nagari script of all periods and areas is more or less shaped after the earlier Gupta type which is clearly after its parent letter of the 2nd century A.D. and the curl towards the end of the right end is to be noted.

Na.—In Mauryan script and in the script of the early Tamil caves *ṇa* (Fig. 44) has two strokes at the top and bottom connected in the middle by a vertical stroke which give it the appearance of 'H' resting on one of its sides. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script a stroke to the right is added at the middle of the vertical. Though in Sātāvāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the letter is more or less the same, the base line of contemporary Kṣatrapa letter and the base and top strokes of the Kuṣāṇ letter of the same date and of the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. curve a bit giving the letter somewhat the appearance of 'X' composed of two crescents joined back to back. The letter in Northern Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. and that of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is composed of a small horizontal stroke with both ends rising vertically and curving out in opposite directions. Two small strokes joining to continue as a vertical stroke which branches off to curve downwards in opposite directions compose the letter in Śālikāyana, Viṣṇukunḍin, Pallava, Western Ganga and Western Cālukyan scripts of the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries A.D. But as in the Southern variety of Gupta script, in Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Nala, Eastern Ganga scripts of about the same date one of the two small strokes at the base changes into a loop to the left; and in the first two as well as in the Nala letter a box-head is present where the vertical branches off into two downward curves. In the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the letter is of the type of the Northern Gupta variety and from this is derived the Nagari letter in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions and those of the Pallavas, wherein the strokes composing the curves are lengthened downwards and the small horizontal stroke slants to right. In Western Cālukya and Pratihāra scripts of the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. respectively the type is the same, though in Pāla script of the 9th century the vertical upward and downward

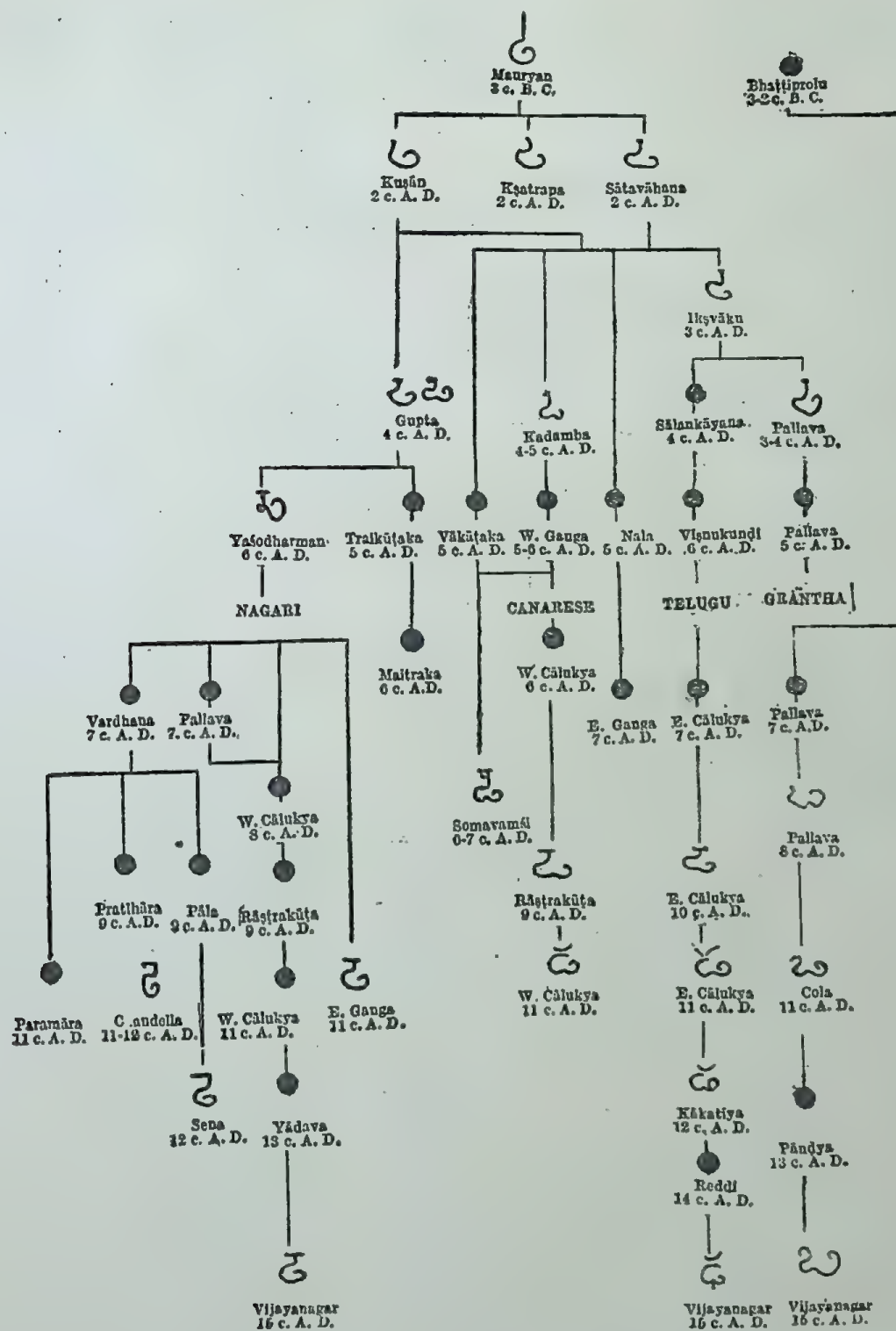


FIG. 43.

C.S. del.

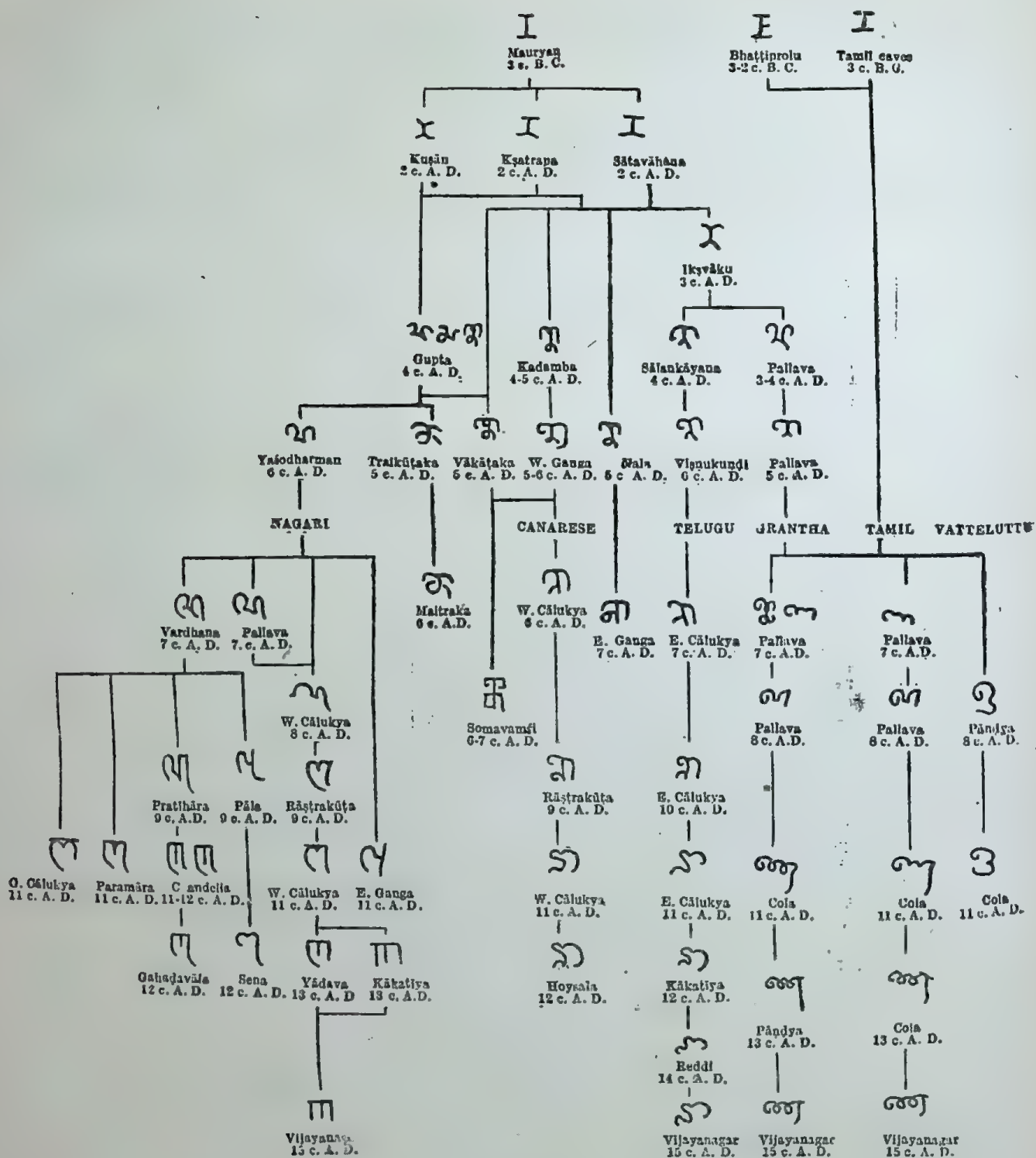


FIG. 44.

C.S. del.

strokes composing the limb to the right change into a single stroke. In contemporary Rāṣṭrakūṭa script the small central horizontal stroke disappears or dwindles into a small stroke which itself branches off to curve downwards in opposite directions. The double curve thus formed at the top is crowned by a horizontal stroke in Gujrat Cālukya, Paramāra and Western Cālukya scripts of the 11th century A.D. In Ganga script of the same century the letter is more or less like that of the Pāla script already described. The Candella, Gāhaḍavāla, Yādava, Kākatīya, and Vijayanagara letters of the 12th, 13th and 15th centuries A.D. look like 'E' with its three strokes facing downwards.

The Western Cālukyan letter is more or less like that of contemporary Viṣṇukunḍin or Pallava script. In Western Cālukyan and Hoysala scripts of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. the two small strokes at the base form a small curve to the right allowing the vertical to run up curving to left in continuation and develop a double bend and a large curve to right.

In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. the letter resembles its Western Cālukyan cousin and the later developments during the centuries are quite akin to those in the Canarese area.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the letter is of two types ; one is more or less like the earlier type of the same script with however this difference that the top left curve is curled and the left stroke at the base is changed into a loop ; another is shaped like the profile of a spring straightened but still retaining some of the curves. In the 8th century A.D. the letter is formed by a curl to the left continuing as a small horizontal stroke, and then an upward curve which abruptly descends as a straight vertical. In the 11th century A.D. the letter starts as a curl and forms two loops before it descends vertically downwards to some length. In the subsequent centuries this continues.

In Tamil script all the varieties of Grantha are repeated during the centuries.

In Vatteluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter starts as a loop, curves to right, bends twice in its downward curve and runs again to left. This form continues in the 11th century A.D.

Ta.—In Mauryan script and in the script of the Tamil caves it (Fig. 45) is like 'Y' upside down ; the Bhaṭṭiprolu letter has a stroke as usual added to its right. In the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D. the letter has a thick serif-like top and the two lower limbs curve to form a horse-shoe shape. In the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. the left lower limb forms a loop. The small vertical over the horse-shoe has a wedge-shaped cap in the Northern variety of the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., though in the Central Indian variety there is a box-head instead. This box-head is found

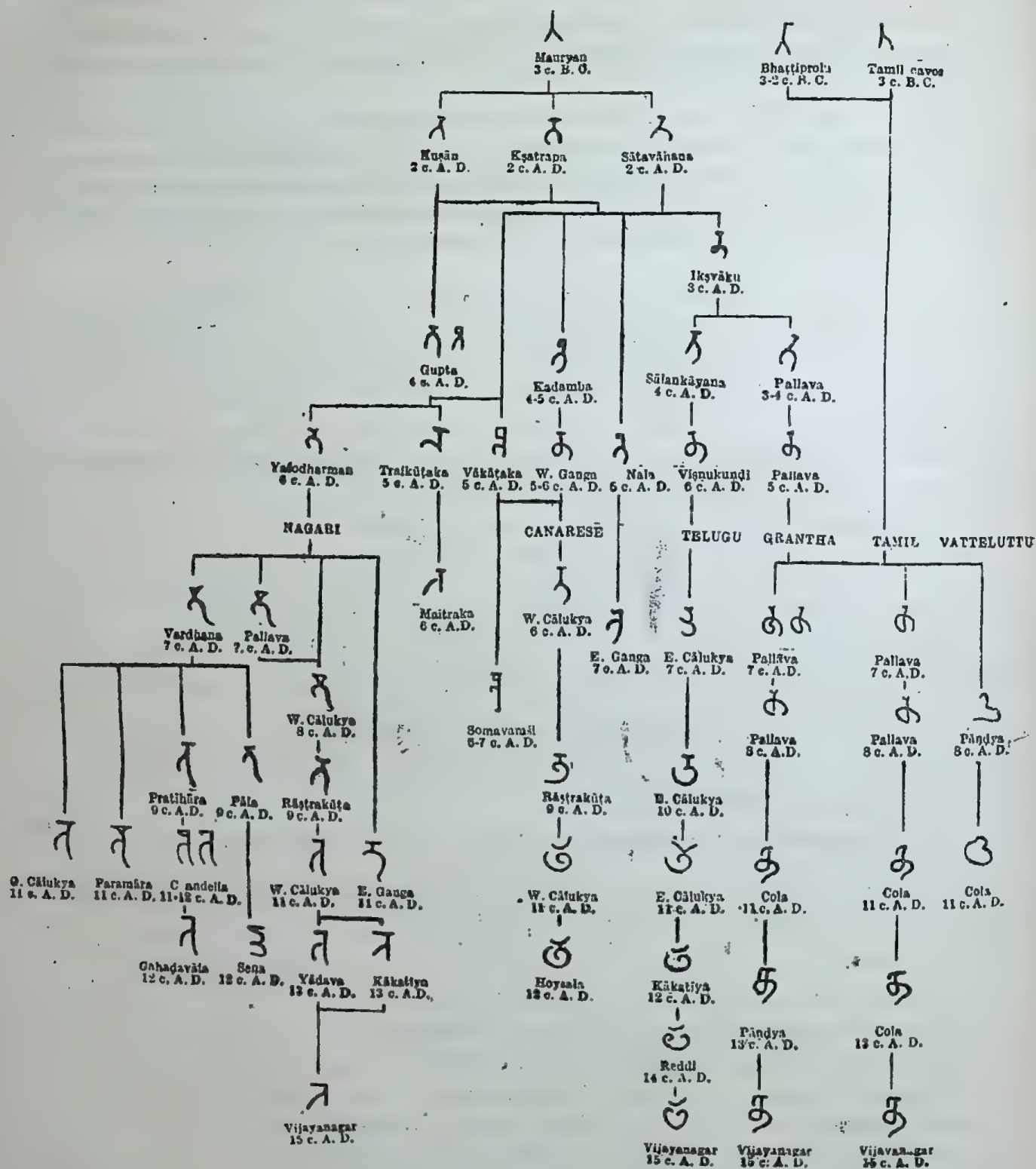


FIG. 45.

C.S. del.

in Kadamba, Vākātaka, Nala and Somavamśi letters. The looped form at the lower end of the vertical is found in Western Ganga and Viṣṇukunḍin letter of the 5th-6th centuries A.D.

In the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the wedge is on the horse-shoe much as in earlier Gupta script and this form is continued in the Nagari of Harṣavarddhana's time as also in Pallava Nagari of the 7th century A.D., the arm of the horse-shoe tending to get shortened to the left and lengthened and slightly curved at the terminal to the right. The Western Cālukya letter of the 8th century A.D. is much the same. In Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D., Gujrat Cālukya, Western Cālukya, Eastern Ganga scripts of the 11th century A.D. Gāhaḍavāla script of the 12th century A.D., Yādava and Kākatiya scripts of the 13th century A.D. and Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. which show further development of the form, the wedge on top is replaced by a horizontal stroke on top of the vertical, which in the first four and in the Eastern Ganga letter looks like a small 'T' on a hook. The Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. however has a triangular top and the Sena letter of the 12th century A.D. looks a cork-screw silhouetted or like the numeral 3 connected to a top horizontal stroke.

The Western Cālukya letter of the 6th century A.D. is a vertical stroke with small serif situated on a hook. In the 9th century Rāṣṭrakūṭa script the letter is composed of a 'T' on a curl. In the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala letter of the 11th-12th centuries A.D. this curl becomes more pronounced and a crescent replaces the 'T' shaped serif.

In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. and in the three subsequent centuries the vertical with small serif and the curl give a shape approximating the numeral 3; in the 11th century A.D. the serif changes into two large strokes shaped like 'V' widened; but from the next century onwards it is changed into a crescent as in contemporary Hoysala script. In the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. the semi-circular belly of the letter curves in at both ends beneath the crescent.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. this is almost like its predecessor two centuries earlier. The top end of the vertical stroke is slightly forked. This continues in the next century A.D. but the letter is more buxom. In the 11th century Coḷa script the vertical develops a hook-shaped top and the curve in continuation of the loop descends aslant. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya letter the hook changes into an open rectangle which continues in all later script.

The development of the letter in Tamil is not different from that in Grantha.

In Pāṇḍyan Vatteluttu of the 8th century A.D. the letter is somewhat like No. 3 with the bottom slightly enlarged and projecting to right. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. the lower half of the letter sweeps up as a broad curve to reach the top.

Tha.—In Mauryan script and the script of the Tamil caves it (Fig. 46) is a circle with a dot in the centre. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter has a top stroke added to right. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa

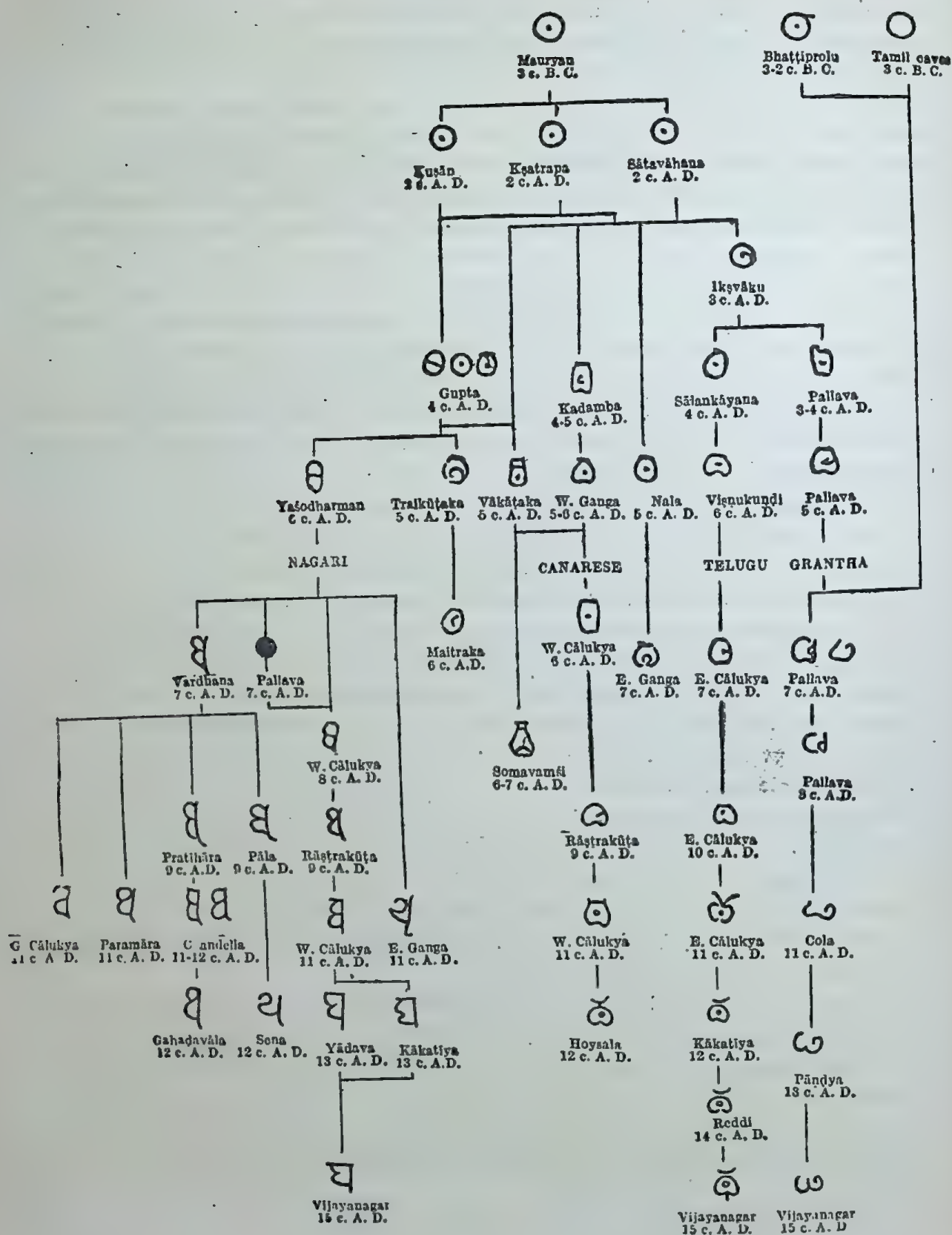


FIG. 46.

C. S. del.

and Sātavāhana writing of the 2nd century A.D. and Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. it is the same circle and dot that make up the letter. In the Northern Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. a slightly elliptical circle with a central dividing line or a circle with central dot make the letter, while in the Central Indian variety the top of the ellipse with central dot is at once flattened and thickened. The Kadamba letter of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. tends to appear somewhat rectangular standing heightwise with thickened flat top and base slightly curved-in centrally and with the central dot as a small circlet. The early Pallava letter of the Prakrit charters is somewhat similarly rectangular though the Śāṅkāyana letter of the 4th century A.D. is an oval but both have the central dot. The Traikūṭaka, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukūṇḍin and Pallava—all of the 5th century A.D., have flattened and thickened top and all dots in the middle except the first and last which have a larger and small incomplete circlet in the place of the dot; the base of the last two has also the central inward curve; the Maitraka letter has a small arch in the centre of the oval. The Vākāṭaka letter and its derivative in the Somavamśi script of the 6th-7th century A.D. have a box-head top and the latter has an arch which forms an upturned boat-shape at the base of the conical flask-shaped letter. The Eastern Ganga letter is like that in Nala script but the dot is replaced by a circlet nearer the base than the centre.

The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is just an elongated type of the Gupta one with a central horizontal stroke across an ellipse. In the regular Nagari of the 7th century A.D., as seen in the script of Harṣavarddhana's inscriptions, the letter develops a straight vertical line to right with two closely knit spherules attached to the left, one below another, so that the letter looks like 'B' reversed. It looks similar in Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D., the Pratihāra, Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D., as also in later scripts where the vertical is lengthened slightly downwards and sometimes slightly curved terminally to right. In the Gujrat Cālukyan letter of 11th century A.D. the top spherule is opened out. In the contemporary Eastern Ganga script the top spherule opens and the lower one becomes somewhat angularly curved, giving the contour of the neck of a goose. In the Sena letter of the 12th century A.D. the letter is formed of a line twice curved in the shape of a swan's neck and separated from the vertical line. The Yādava and Kākatiya letter of the 13th century A.D. and the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. have almost a rectangular shape with the vertical stroke slightly lengthened at the lower end and having an inward curve on the left side.

The Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century which is a rectangle standing heightwise with a dot in the belly changes into a more rounded form with the base centrally curved in in the 9th century Rāṣṭrakūṭa script. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter the central dot in this becomes a circlet and the top is flattened with two slight ear-like projections at either end on top. In the Hoysala script of the next century the flattened top line with projecting ends becomes a crescent placed slightly above.

The development of the letter in the Eastern Cālukyan script is almost on the same lines as in Western Cālukyan but in the 11th century A.D. the top line shoots up into two strokes 'V' shaped. In this and the Redḍi script of the 14th century A.D. there is a break in the base line where it curves in slightly. In the latter and in Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. the letter has a circlet instead of a dot in the centre and in the 15th century letter a small downward stroke is added centrally at the base.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. the earlier type of the letter is continued but with the letter slightly opened to the right top making the side stroke vertical and a small circlet is added to it a little above the middle. In the 8th century A.D. the circlet is lowered down. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. the letter is simplified; it opens out widely and beyond the double curve of the base curls at the right terminal. The form continues in the thirteenth century Pāṇḍya script and in the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. the slight curve of the base changes into a regular stroke giving it the appearance of the numeral .3 with a curl at the top terminal and laid on its back.

Da.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 47) is a semi-circle with the ends continued at the top and base vertically. It is reversed in Bhaṭṭiprolu script and a top stroke is added to the right. In Kṣatrapa script the Mauryan form of the letter continues though the lower vertical stroke curves to right. But in contemporary Kuṣāṇ and Sātavāhana scripts as also in Ikṣvāku, Gupta, Kadamba, Śāṅkākāyana, Pallava, Traikūṭaka, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukūṇḍi, Maitraka, Somavamśi, Eastern Gāṅga, Western and Eastern Cālukyan scripts the sickle-shape continues with slight changes. In Gupta, Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Eastern Ganga and Somavamśi scripts the letter has a box-head and in most of the letters of the 7th century A.D. and onwards the base line curves in slightly in the middle. In the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the letter has a top wedge and a short angular beak at the back. From this is derived the Nagari letter of Harṣavarddhana's time and that of the Pallava Nagari of the 7th century A.D. In the latter the curved base line suddenly slants down to right. In the 8th century Western Cālukyan script the letter continues so. In the 9th century Nagari script the wedge is replaced by a top line except in Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. and the slanting downward stroke lengthened a bit and thereafter the letter tends to be almost like the Mauryan one reversed and with top horizontal stroke added.

The top serif of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. appears more prominent in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter three centuries later and in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century and later the top horizontal changes into a crescent on top of the body of the letter unconnected by the small top vertical stroke which is now lost.

In the script of the Eastern Cālukyas, Kākātīyas, Redḍis, and in Vijayanagara script the development of the letter may be observed as quite similar to the Western Cālukyan except that the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. has its serif changed into two strokes looking like 'V' above the body of the letter.

The basic form of the Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. is not different from the earlier type except that every stroke and curve is more ornamental and the end of the vertical top stroke is forked. The lower stroke which is still small in the 8th century A.D. Pallava Grantha letter is lengthened and slants to left in the 11th century Coḷa script while the top stroke curves to form hook-shape. It is almost the same in the 13th century Pāṇḍya script but in the 15th century Vijayanagara script the hook is enlarged.

Dha.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 48) is like a strung bow with string to left or simpler still, like 'D'. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is reversed with a stroke to top right. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters it is like 'D' reversed. In the Ikṣvāku and Northern variety of Gupta script the letter is of the same type. In the Gupta letter of the Central Indian variety it is more or less shaped like an egg with flattened and thickened top. The Kadamba letter of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. has a flattened and thickened top and a base curved in the middle. The Śāṅkayana, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka and Nala letters are egg-shaped, though with top slightly flattened and thickened. The Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi letters have a box-head. The Western Ganga, Viṣṇukūṇḍi, Pallava, Western and Eastern Cālukyan letters have the usual inward curve in the base. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions tends to be pointed towards the lower end and thereafter in all the Nagari letters it is generally shaped like the left half of a leaf, broad or narrow. With its pointed and prolonged lower end of vertical it looks somewhat like reversed 'P' in Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa and Sena script but with the vertical projecting topward it appears somewhat like 'P' reversed and upside down in Paramāra, Candella, Western Cālukya and Gāhaḍavāla scripts. In Yādava and Kākatīya scripts the letter looks like 'R' reversed and upside down, and the Vijayanagara letter is only a modification of the Kākatīya letter.

In Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D., it is the earlier type of a rectangle standing heightwise with the base line curved in the middle. The later developments of the letter with its buxom apple-shape and a crescent top show it exactly like *tha* with the central dot absent.

In Eastern Cālukyan script also the development is just as in *tha* without the dot in the centre.

The Grantha letter is similarly allied to *tha* without the circlet or the later curl to the left.

Na.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 49) is like inverted 'T'. In the contemporary script of the Tamil caves there are two types, one like the Mauryan letter and another with the vertical terminally curved to right. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is like the Mauryan one with the usual addition to the top stroke to the right. In the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters of the 2nd century A.D. the top end of the vertical is thickened and the horizontal base inclined downwards at both ends making the letter look somewhat though not exactly like

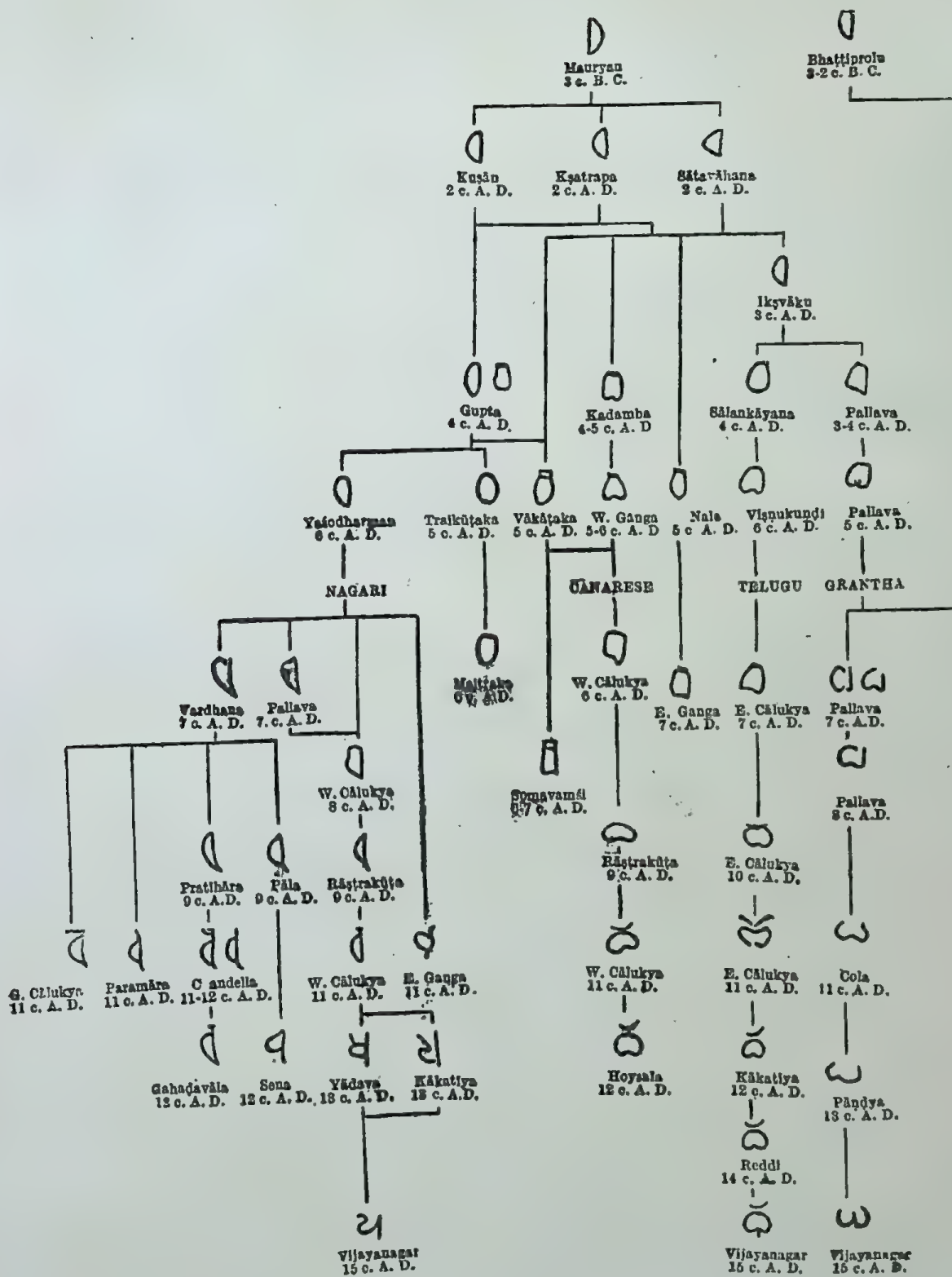
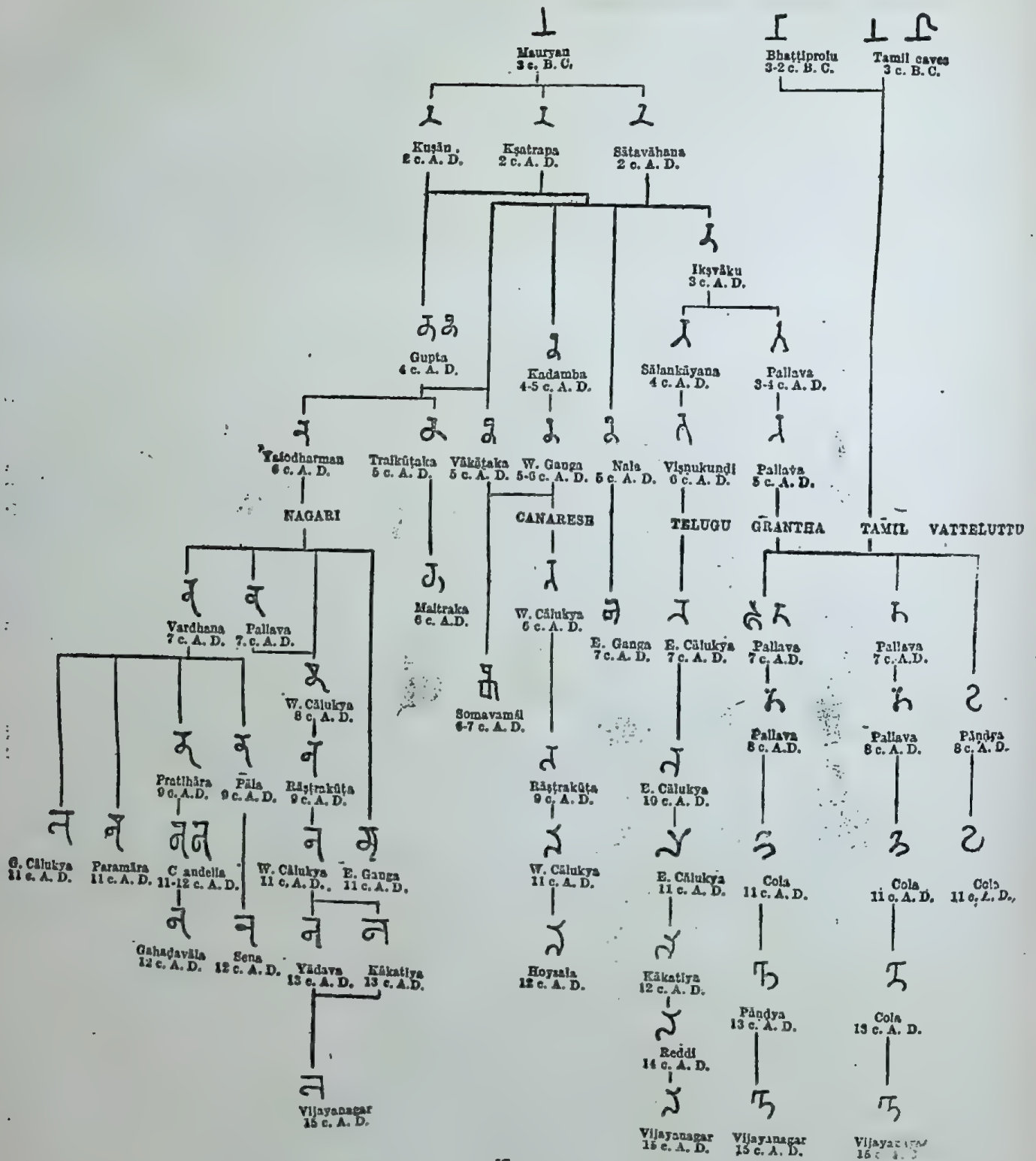


FIG. 18.

C. S. del.



IG. 49.

C. S. del.

inverted 'Y'. In the Ikṣvāku script the letter is composed of the vertical stroke forming a small loop at the base to left and curling beyond downward to right. Except in Śālan-kāyana, Pallava and Viṣṇukunḍin scripts where the letter retains the inverted 'Y' shape but in a more pronounced manner than in 2nd century A.D., in all the rest like Gupta, Kadamba, Traikūṭaka, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Maitraka, Somavamsi, Eastern Ganga and the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the loop to the left of the base is present. In the Central Indian variety of Gupta script, Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala and Somavamsi scripts the letter has a box-head. In the Nagari of the 7th century A.D. the vertical starts with wedged top and after forming a loop to left runs down, inclined to right slightly. The wedge of the 8th century Western Cālukyan letter is more pronounced and the stroke beyond the loop to right is a broader curve. Though the wedge is replaced by a top line or serif in Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts which continues thereafter, the form of the body of the letter is the same in the first two but in the third there is a vertical stroke and from its middle to the left is a small horizontal stroke which terminally forms a loop. Except in Gujrat Cālukyan and Vijayanagara scripts of the 11th and 15th centuries A.D. where a curve is present instead of the loop, the letter is of the same type all over. In Sena script the loop is filled and in Eastern Ganga script the line forming the loop runs parallel to the vertical to touch the serif.

In Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D. the vertical stroke with serif has a small curved stroke as the left limb near its base. In the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. this curved stroke becomes more prominent, and in the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter, the vertical curves inward a bit, the serif turns a crescent and with the curved left limb it assumes a shape that continues thereafter almost the same. In Eastern Cālukyan, Kākatīya, Reḍḍi and Vijayanagara scripts the development of the form of the letter is similar to that in Western Cālukyan except that in the 11th century A.D. the serif of the letter is forked 'V' like.

In Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the top end of the vertical is either forked or has a small serif and to the right is a curved limb. In the 8th century A.D. the vertical loops rather imperceptibly to the left base before continuing to right to form the curved limb. A hook-shaped top of the vertical, somewhat slanting down to left and continuing to right, as the curved limb, constitutes the Coḷa Grantha letter of the 11th century A.D. Two parallel vertical strokes crowned by serif and a curved limb in continuation of the right vertical constitute *na* of the Pāṇḍyan script of 13th century A.D. and thereafter.

In Tamil script the development of this letter is exactly as in Grantha.

In Vaṭṭeluttu the letter is like 'S' reversed both in Pāṇḍya script of the 8th century A.D. and in Coḷa inscriptions three centuries later.

Pa.—This (Fig. 50) is composed of a vertical curved to right at base and shaped like a hook in the Mauryan script. The letter of the Bhattiprolu script has a top stroke to right

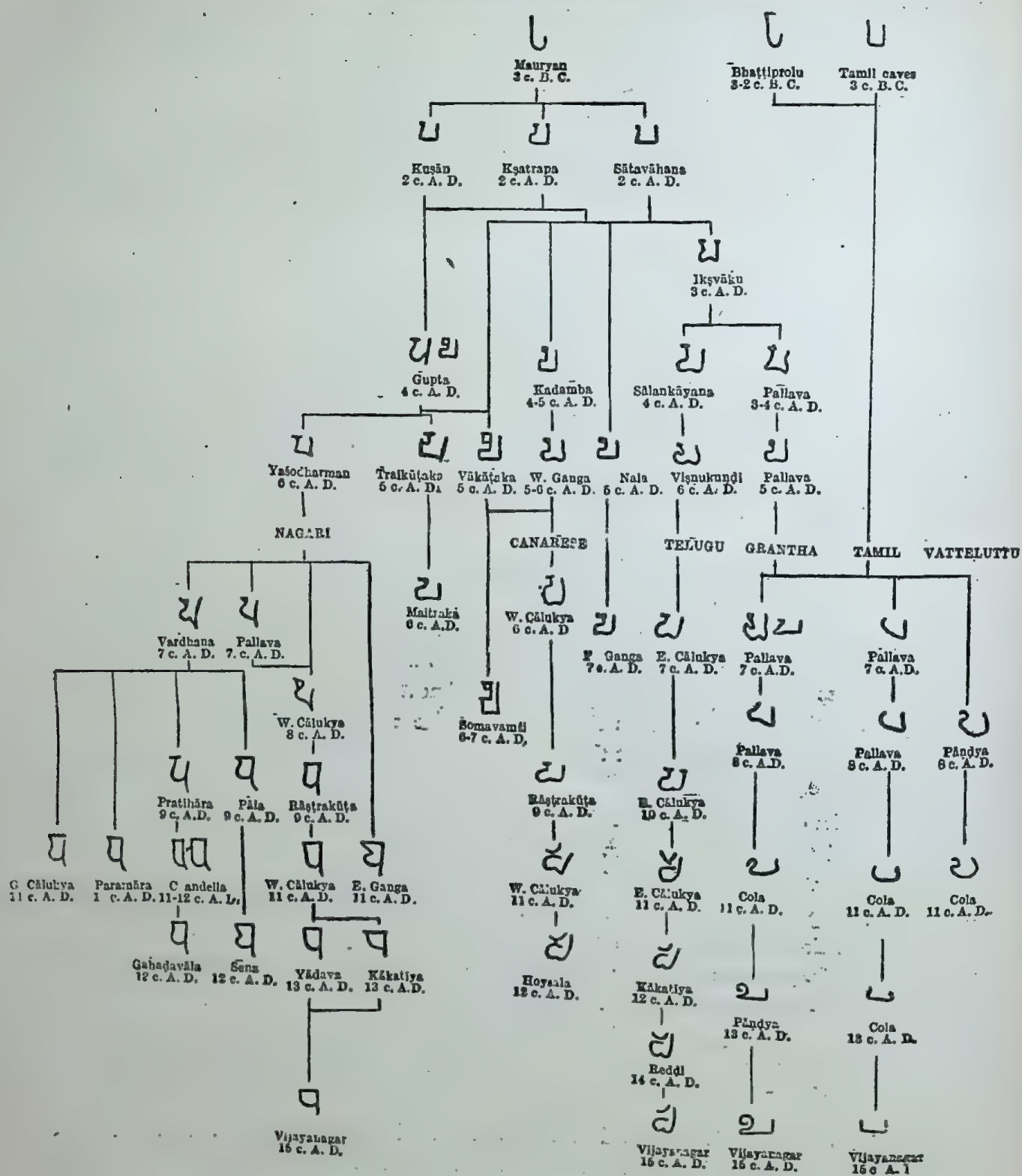


FIG. 50.

C.S. det.

added. In the script of the early Tamil caves the letter is an open rectangle standing heightwise. The Kuṣāṇ and Sātavāhāna letter of the 2nd century A.D. is an open square while in contemporary Kṣatrapa letter the side stroke to left is indented half way up ; and in all the three the left stroke is thickened at the top end. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the left stroke and the base are both curved in slightly centrally and both the vertical strokes are terminally thickened. The letter in Northern Gupta script resembles 'U' with a serif at the left top and the right vertical slightly prolonged straight downwards. The Central Indian Gupta letter is an open square and the top half of the left stroke is indented and crowned with a box-head. The letter is similar in Kadamba, Nala, Somavamsī and Eastern Ganga scripts, though in Western Ganga and Pallava scripts of the 5th century A.D. the box-head is not very distinctive. Except for the box-head which is replaced by a small serif the letter is similar in Śāṅkayana, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Viṣṇukūṇḍin, early Western and Eastern Cālukyan scripts. But in the Śāṅkayana, Western Ganga, Viṣṇukūṇḍin, Pallava, Western and Eastern Cālukyan letter the base line very slightly curves in at the centre. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions has a wedge-shaped serif to the left and the base line slants down slightly to right ; and the Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D. is more developed, the wedge clearer, and the slant of the base line more pronounced. In the letter from Harṣavardhana's inscriptions the base line curves in centrally slightly. In this and the Pallava letter of the same date the vertical stroke is slightly prolonged downwards. The letter of 8th century Western Cālukyan script is not different. The Pratihāra letter of the 9th century A.D. is like 'U' with serif on the arm to left and the arm to right prolonged downward vertically. The serif becomes a top horizontal stroke touching both the arms in the letter of contemporary Pāla and Rāṣtrakūṭa scripts and in all later Nagari variations. The left arm of the letter in Eastern Ganga and Sena script of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. slants in from the top and curves out again.

The letter in Western Cālukya and Rāṣtrakūṭa scripts of the 6th and 9th centuries A.D. is after the earlier type like Western Ganga, but a small serif crowns the indented top end of the left limb. The Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. changes its serif into a crescent above the left arm which curves in and stops.

In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. it is like its western cousin ; in the 10th century a wedge-like serif crowns the right as well as the left limb and in the 11th century A.D. two 'V' shaped strokes replace the serif ; but from the next century onwards in Kākatiya Reddī and Vijayanagara scripts the crescent appears as in the Canarese area.

In the Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. one variety is after the earlier type with the arm to left indented half-way towards the top and with the base line centrally curved in somewhat ; in addition the arm to left is terminally slightly forked. The other variety is an open rectangle with the arm to left slanting inwards and thickened at its top end. In the

letter of the script of the next century the arm to the left slants inwards and a dot is added to left at its tip. The base line slants down to right a little and curves slightly. The right arm is a straight vertical. In the 11th century Coḷa script the dot joins the end of the left arm to form a hook and the whole letter is like the numeral 2 with the base line prolonged and raised up a little vertically.

In Tamil the letter of the 7th century has a left limb which curves and slants down to the right as the base line and mounts up vertically. In the next century it is the same type but in the 11th century Coḷa script the letter is an open rectangle with the two corners at the base rounded. In the 13th century Coḷa script and 15th century Vijayanagara script the corners of the letter are more angular and it looks like 'E' on its back without the middle stroke.

In Vaṭṭeluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter starts as a hook and turns backward and up, giving the lower contour of the head, neck and body of a duck. It continues this shape in the 11th century A.D.

Pha.—In Mauryan, Bhaṭṭiprolu, Kṣātrapa and other early script the letter (Fig. 51) is the same as *pa* except that the lower end is curled in. In Gupta script the arm to the right curves to form a loop touching the base in the centre. This is the case of the Vākāṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. and the letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions of the 6th century A.D. In Kadamba, Śālankāyana, Pallava, Western Ganga, Viṣṇukunḍin scripts of the 4th-5th centuries A.D., Maitraka and Western Cālukyan scripts of the 6th century A.D., Somavamśi and Eastern Cālukyan script of about the 7th century A.D. the right arm of the letter curves in. The Eastern Ganga and Pallava letters of the 7th century A.D. form a loop to the right.

The Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D., as seen in the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana, has a loop to the right. In Pāla script of the 9th century A.D. the arm to right terminally curves out but the contemporary Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter has an outer loop at the top to right. In Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. the line forming the outer loop runs down again parallel to the vertical. In the Eastern Ganga letter of the 11th century A.D. the loop is replaced by a downward double curve starting from top to right. In the Gāhaḍavāla letter of the 12th century A.D. the double curve starts a little above the middle to right. In the Sena script the letter is basically the same as its parent, though it slants and has the vertical extended downwards in curvilinear shape. The Kākatīya and Vijayanagara letter of the 13th and 15th century A.D. has a stroke shaped like 'S' reversed, added to the right.

The terminal inward curve of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. is replaced in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter three centuries later by a small crescent-like downward median curve, added on the inside to the right arm. In the Hoysala letter of the 12th century A.D. the downward crescent actually cuts the right arm towards the base.

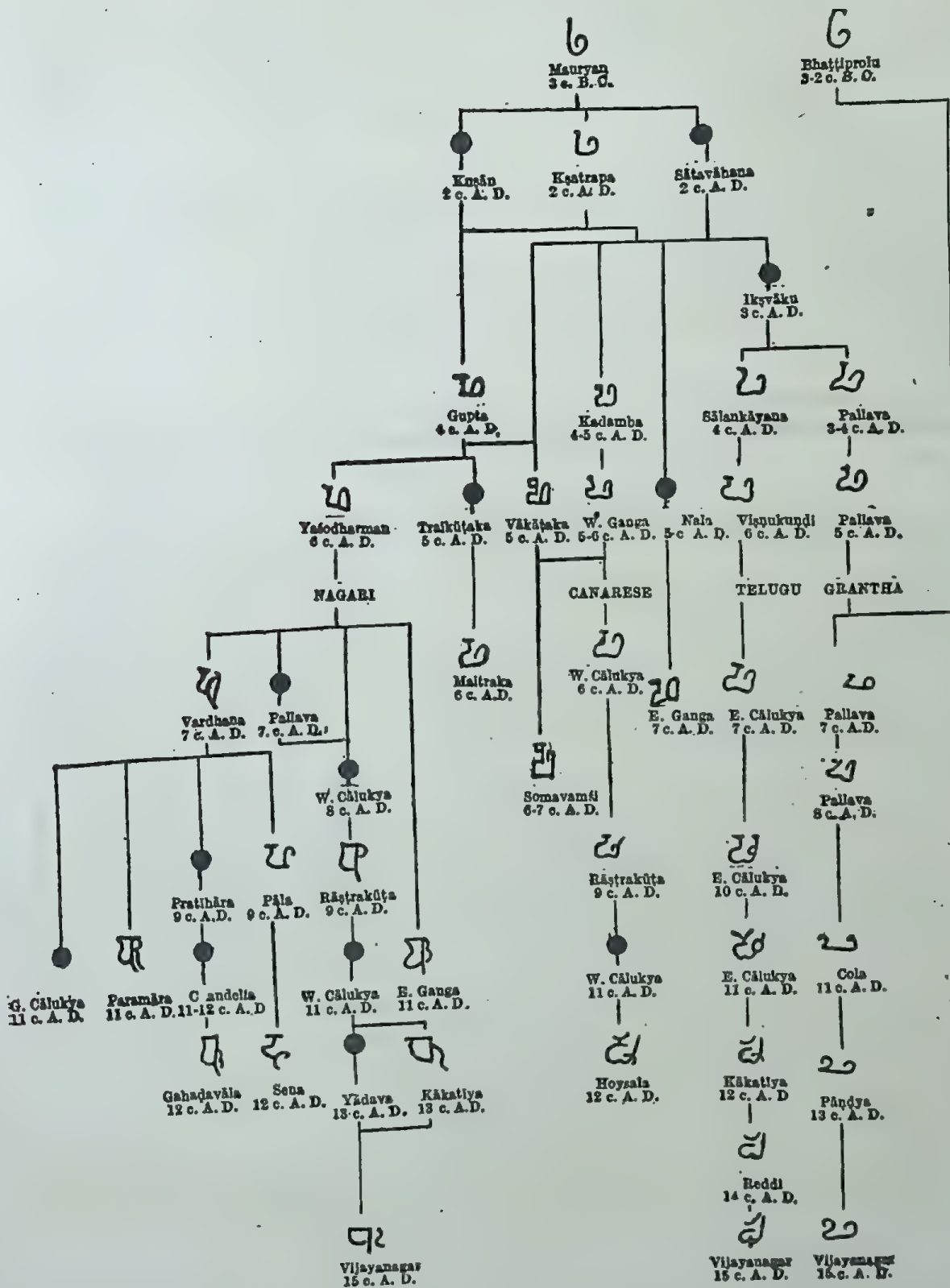


FIG. 51.

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In the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D. the small crescent is replaced by a semi-circlet which touches the right arm at both ends. This is developed into a regular median circle, breaking the right arm, in the letter of the 11th century A.D. The letter of the Kākatiya script is like the Hoysala one, though in the Redḍi letter the crescent is shifted below the letter. In Vijayanagara script a stroke below the base replaces the crescent.

In Grantha script the earliest form of the letter shows a loop to the right, but later it is always the inward terminal curve of the right arm that distinguishes *pha* from *pa*.

Ba.—The Mauryan letter (Fig. 52) is a square and in Bhaṭṭiprolu script it has the addition of an outer stroke centrally to the right. It remains a square even in the 2nd century script of the Śātavāhanas. But pronouncedly in contemporary Kṣatrapa script and less so in Kuṣāṇ script the left arm of the letter has a median inward curve. This median curve is present in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. The Northern variety of Gupta script shows the letter more or less as a square but the median curve is quite pronounced in the letter of the Southern variety. The Kadamba letter of about the same date and the Western Ganga letter of the 5th-6th centuries A.D. are not different except that the former is a little elongate heightwise. In the Pallava letter of the Prakrit charters of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. and the Vākāṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. the left side is indented in the centre in such a manner that a small open square is formed. There is a break in the line to the left in the Sālankāyana letter of the 4th century A.D. and Viṣṇukunḍin letter of the 6th century A.D., which is maintained even in the 7th century Eastern Cālukyan letter. In the early Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions there is a wedge-shaped serif and a semi-circular belly to left against the vertical stroke. It appears similarly in Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D., though in Pallava script of the 7th century A.D. it is shaped somewhat like 'B' reversed without the central stroke. In almost every other variety of later Nagari the serif, semi-circular belly and the right vertical continue. The belly is divided by a stroke in the letter of the Yādava and Vijayanagara script of the 13th and 15th centuries respectively.

In Canarese script of the 6th century A.D. the letter already shows a slight median inward curve at its base in addition to the indented left side. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter the top opens, the left side top curls inward out and the median curve gets more pronounced. This continues in the Hoysala letter of the next century.

In the Telugu script of the Eastern Cālukyan territory the development is not very different from that in the Canarese area, except that in the 10th century A.D. Eastern Cālukyan letter the top end of the right arm is thickened serif-like and in the 11th century letter the curl to the left top is aggressive and there is a median break in the base line as in *ca* of the period.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties, one showing the letter with indented left side and with top and base line medially curved in slightly; and another

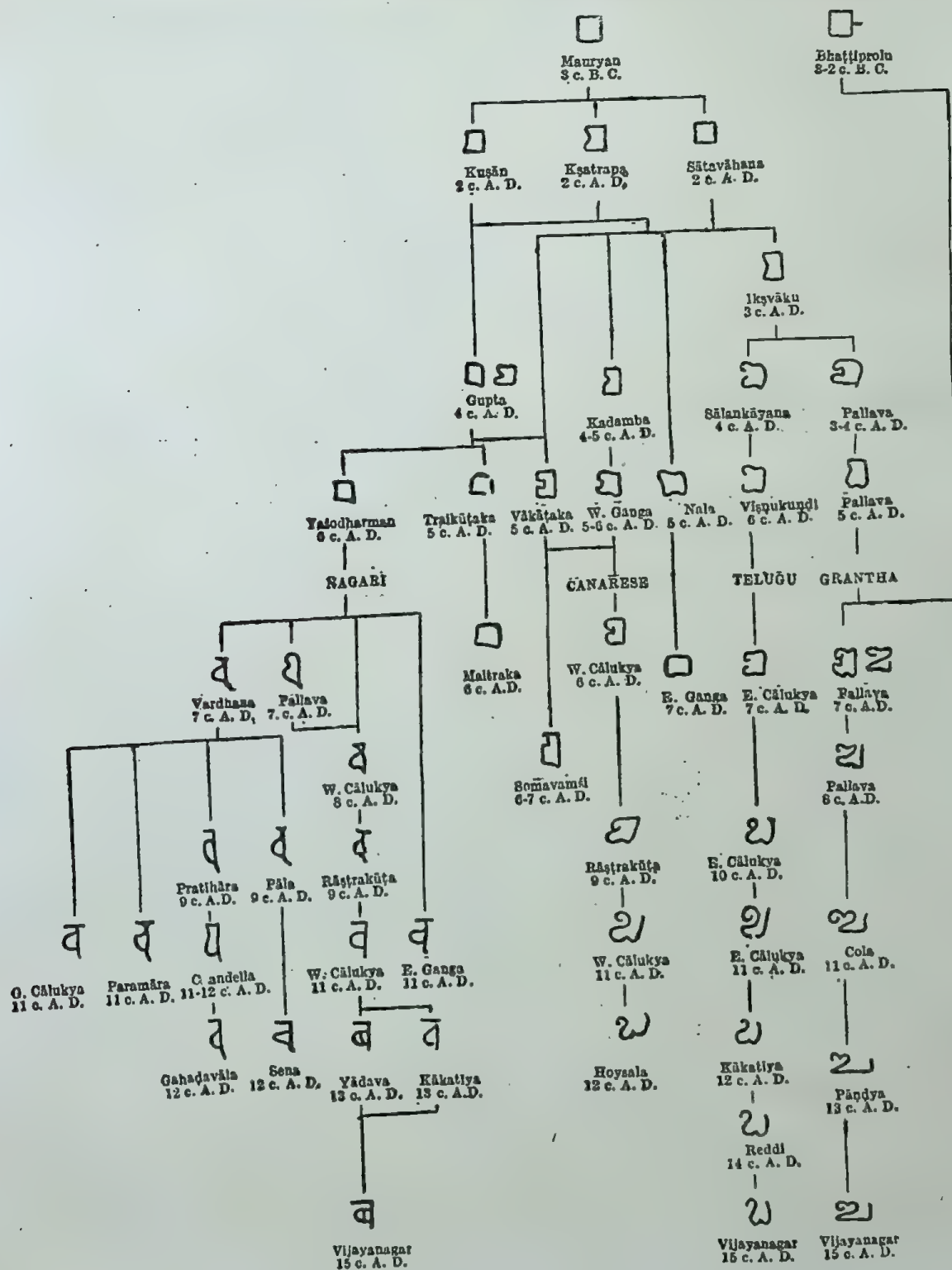


FIG. 52.

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starting as a double curved top line from left to right slanting down to left medially curving again in the base line and rising up vertically. This second form continues more or less unchanged during the later centuries.

Bha.—In Mauryan script *bha* (Fig. 53) is like *da* with an additional vertical stroke to right, parallel to the lower one. In Bhāṭṭiprolu script this is reversed and a stroke added to top right. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrāpa and Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the body of the letter is double bent like a bow having a vertical stroke with thickened end on top of the right hump. The curve to the right shoots up cliff-like in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. In the Gupta letter of the Northern variety a serif-crowned vertical stroke and a stroke starting from the neck and slightly slanting down to left and again down to right form the letter. In the Central Indian variety the top of the letter is crowned with a box-head, as also in the letter of the Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nāla and Somavamśi scripts. Whenever the body of the letter is not curved it is a rectangle with the base open and with the vertical line to right continued up and finally thickened or crowned by a box-head. In the script of the Maitrakas the two side-strokes petal-like meet at the top. The Somavamśi letter forms two small open squares to left and at the bottom being composed of two straight strokes. The letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions and of Pallava Nagari of the same date starts with a wedged head, curves down to left, runs down straight aslant to right slightly and curves again to right. This form of the letter is repeated in Western Cālukyan script of the next century and in Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. But in Pratīhāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D., Gujrat Cālukya and Eastern Ganga scripts of the 11th century A.D. the wedge is replaced by a horizontal serif stroke. In Candella and Gāhaḍavala script the letter comprises a serif line, a vertical stroke to right and a small central stroke against the vertical branching off to form a triangle or wedge. In Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. and the Sena, Yādava and Kākatīya scripts the triangle is replaced by a stroke which also lingers in the Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D.

In script of the Canarese area of the 6th century A.D. the curved bow-shaped body and top vertical with small serif make up the letter which continues so even three centuries later, but in the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter the two limbs of the letter separate, the one to the left being like reversed 'S' and the other to the right, an inward arc, crowned by the serif changed into something like a crescent. This continues with greater flourishes in the Hoysala script of the next century.

In the Telugu area the form of the letter is composed of a slanting reversed 'S' shaped left limb and a slightly arc-like right limb meeting at the top which is thickened into a small serif. In the 11th century Eastern Cālukyan and the 12th century Kākatīya script the letter is practically like the contemporary one in the Canarese area, except that in the former the serif is 'V' shaped. In the letter of the Redḍi script of the 14th century A.D., the bottom ends of

the two limbs join in an inward curve and in the Vijayanagara letter of the next century a small vertical stroke is added beneath this central curve in the bottom.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D., one form of the letter is like a triskelis with curved limbs and another like an angle with the end of the base line curved up and to the side to the right. In the next century the letter is so written that it slants down somewhat to right and the top is somewhat forked as usual. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D., the forked top is just curved out, so that the letter looks like a flattened 'S' slanting to right and with its top end curved up. In the 15th century Vijayanagara letter the top curve becomes a curl.

Ma.—In Mauryan script *ma* (Fig. 54) looks like a circle with 'U' on top. In the script of the Tamil caves it is more like 'U' divided in the middle by a horizontal stroke. In the Kuṣāṇ Kṣatrāpa and Sātavāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D. it is an 'X' with a stroke at the base connecting the cross strokes. The base line is slightly double-curved in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. In the Northern variety of the Gupta script it is a square with open top, a serif crowning the left limb and base line elongated to left. In the Central Indian variety the letter has a more or less rectangular belly with the two side-strokes cutting across and forming a 'V' shape above, the left arm being crowned with a box-head. In the Kadamba and Vākaṭaka letter of about the 5th century A.D. the 'V' shaped upper part is to the extreme right, the left stroke slanting, and the right vertical in continuation of the right side stroke of the rectangle; the box-head crowns the left stroke. Modifications of the Ikṣvāku type of letter continue in the 4th-5th centuries A.D. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is based on the Northern Gupta type. The base line starts slanting down to right even here and more pronouncedly in the next century and the projecting part is thickened. In the letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, the contemporary Pallava letter, and in that of the Western Cālukyan of the 8th century A.D., the wedge in the left limb is very clear and in the last one there is a loop in the place of the thickened projection. In 9th century Pratihāra script the wedge is replaced by serif stroke to left and the base line reverts to normal, shedding its slant and the right vertical is projected downwards. In contemporary letter of Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts there is a top horizontal stroke connecting the two verticals. This is the usual form in all the later varieties, except in Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. where the triangular wedge to left top is present in addition, and in Sena script of the 12th century A.D. where the lower horizontal stroke slants down again, the loop changes again into a thickened projection and the left side curves and sweeps up broader at the top to meet the top line.

The early letter of the Canarese area is more or less like the letter of the earlier Śālan-kāyana or Pallava script. The 9th century Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter shows the two arms of the letter shifted to right in such a way that the right arm actually cranes out and rises up and the left limb is crowned by a small serif. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan script the

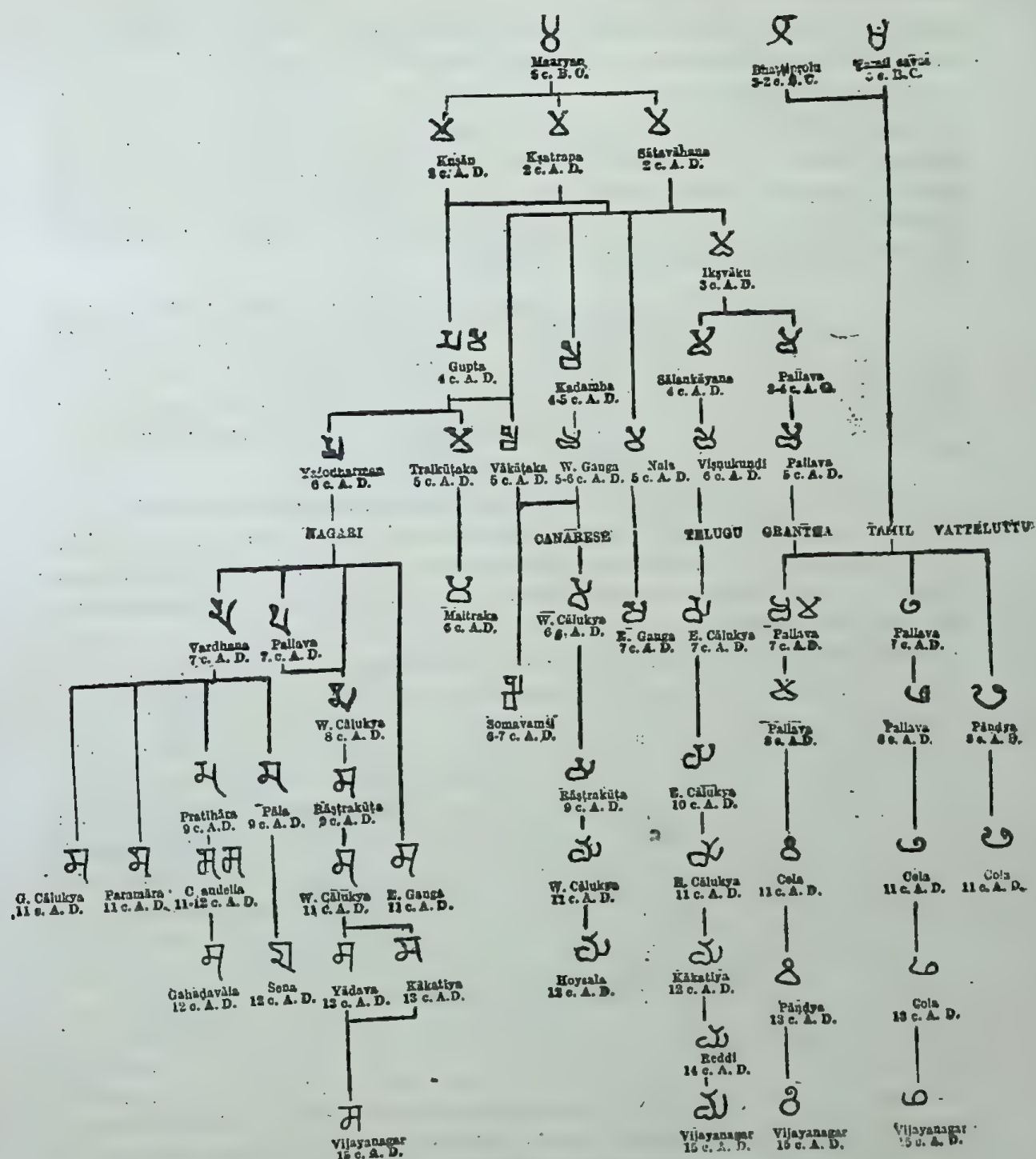


FIG. 54.

C.S. del.

apple-shaped belly of the letter slightly opens, separating itself from the vertical, the top end serif of which is transformed into a crescent and the limb curving upward to the extreme right is present. This form of the letter is continued in the Hoysala script of the next century.

Even in the 7th century Eastern Cālukyan script the right limb of the letter cranes out and the serif is present on top of left limb; in the 10th century A.D. the letter becomes graceful and the top end of the right limb has also small thickened wedge. In the next century the serif of the left limb changes into a 'V' shape and from the following century onwards the letter in the Telugu area is as that of the Canarese.

One of the varieties of the letter in Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. shows it somewhat like the Western Ganga letter of a century earlier, while another is the simpler 'X' with a base line joining the arms. In the next century the second variety is shown with a base line double curved. In the 11th century Coḷa script and later the letter resembles the numeral 8 with the lower part larger and somewhat flattened. In the Vijayanagara script the letter is a circle crowned by a dextral curl.

In Tamil of the 7th century A.D. the letter is a crescent with the right tip curved in. In the next century the right side of the letter has a flattened loop. In the 11th century Coḷa letter the earlier form is repeated but with the base flattened and with the curve to right more approaching a curl. In the 13th century Coḷa script the letter develops a full loop to the right which continues thereafter.

In Vatteluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter has the contour of a goose with a loop at the tail end, and the form continues almost the same in the 11th century A.D.

Ya.—Ya (Fig. 55) in the Mauryan script is a crescent with a long vertical rising from its central point. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu script it has a top stroke to right in addition. In the script of the Tamil caves three prongs of equal length make the letter. In the Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the central stroke is shortened and its tip thickened. In contemporary Kuṣāṇ and Kṣātrapa script the central stroke of the letter is similar, the left limb amply spreads into a curve and the right one shoots up vertically, the curved base of the letter getting flattened and the letter itself tripartite. The Ikṣvāku letter is more or less after the Sātavāhana type but the Northern Gupta letter is after the Kuṣāṇ type, the Central Indian variety being a little compressed and having the central box-head in the place of the serif wedge. The box-head appears in the letter of Kadamba, Nala and Vākāṭaka scripts of about the 5th century A.D. and in the compressed Somavamśi letter of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. The base line between the middle and left limb of the letter of Viṣṇukuṇḍin and Western Cālukyan scripts of the 6th century A.D. and of the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the next century curves in medially and a small serif is present on top of the central stroke of the Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Śālankāyana, Western Gāṅga, Viṣṇukuṇḍin, Western and Eastern Cālukyan letters. The Western Ganga letter presents also a loop to

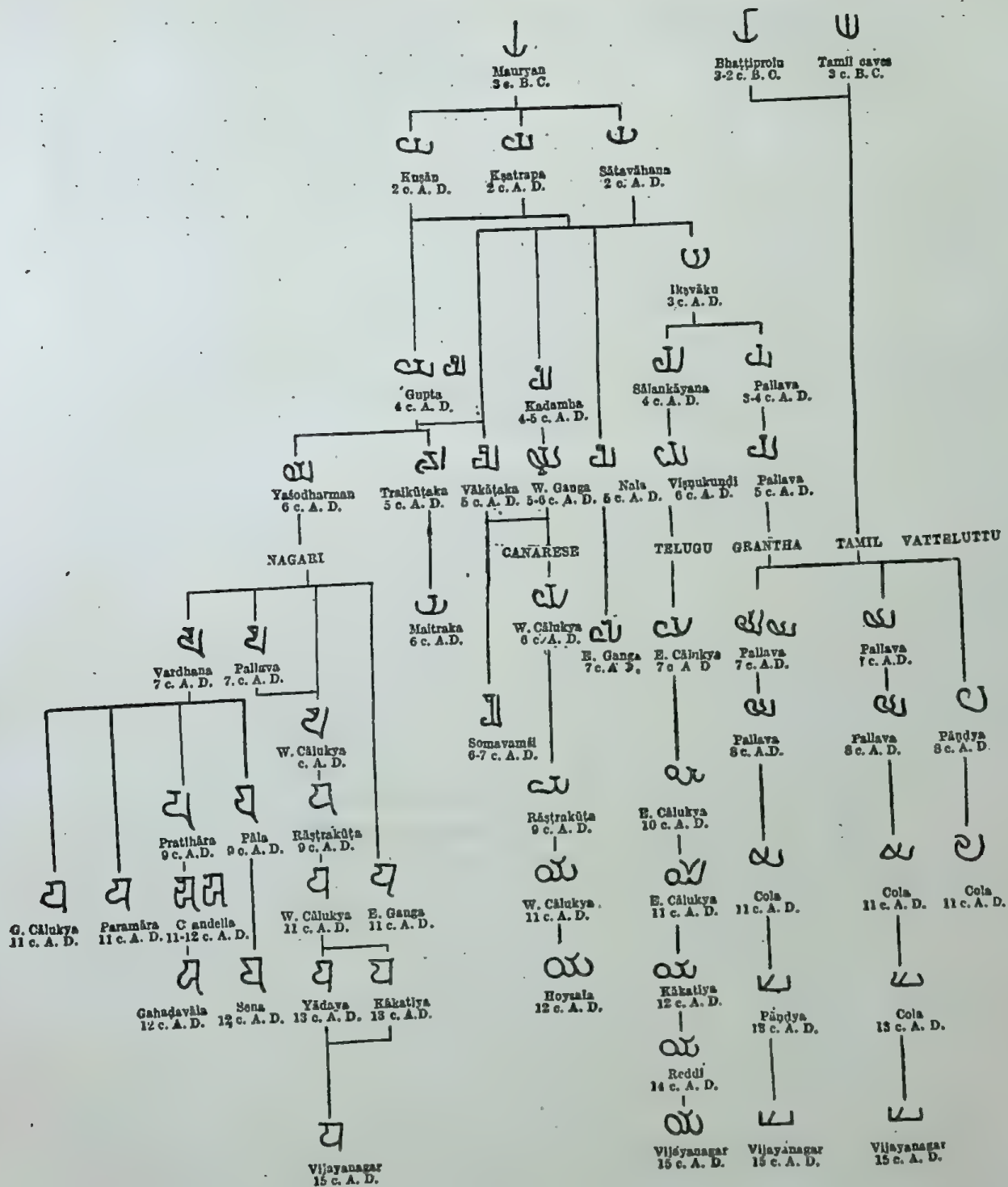


FIG. 55.

C. S. del.

left. In the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the left loop is present and the central stroke has a forked tip. In the Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions and the Pallava Nagari letter of the time the central stroke separates itself from the base and joins the opened up loop and the base line slants down to touch the vertical, the letter thus being bipartite with a wedge on top of the vertical, to left. In Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D. it is the same type of letter that is present. In the Pratihāra script of the next century the wedge is replaced by a serif stroke. But in the contemporary Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter the serif stroke closes the top entirely and this continues in all the later forms. In the Candella letter of the 12th century A.D. the original base line of the letter curves in to touch the vertical.

The Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. becomes a flattened buxom letter in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. and the left limb almost forms a circle touching the inward curve of the base line already formed ; and this circle is perfect in the 11th century Cālukyan letter which has its serif changed into crescent shape. This form continues in the Hoysala letter of the 12th century A.D.

The development of the letter in Eastern Cālukyan area is not so different, the difference being noticeable in the 10th and 11th century inscriptions. In the former the circle to left rises up slightly and the right limb so separates itself that it appears a separate small hook starting from the right end of the small serif. In the latter the serif changes into ' V ' shape and the right limb shoots up vertically rather abnormally. In the 12th century Kākatīya script and thereafter, the development is not different from that of the Canarese area.

In the Grantha of the 7th century A.D., of the two types, one shows the letter with a loop to left and with central and right verticals undulating artistically, the central stroke having forked tip, and the other variety is simpler. The simple variety is continued in the next century with the loop itself curved somewhat. This form is further simplified in the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya script and later the letter is a rectangle with open top and a slanting stroke dividing the angle to left.

In the Tamil script except for the absence of the ornamental type of the 7th century A.D. the letter is exactly like its Grantha prototype.

In Pāṇḍyan Vaṭṭeḷuttu of the 8th century the letter starts as vertical, curves bulgingly upward to left and curves in towards the top. In the 11th century Coḷa letter the curve to left suddenly stops and curves up again almost parallel to the outer curve.

Ra.—The Mauryan letter (Fig. 56) is a wavy vertical. In the Tamil caves the letter is a simple vertical stroke and in the Bhaṭṭiprolu script it is the vertical with the usual stroke to top right. In Kuṣaṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana script this vertical stroke has thickened top end and the lower end curves slightly to left. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the curve of the lower end almost develops into a curl. In the Northern variety of the Gupta script the letter is a vertical stroke with small serif. In its Central Indian variety this is

replaced by a box-head in which the vertical bends at the lower end to shoot up again parallel half-way. In the Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala and Pallava inscriptions of about the 5th century A.D. and in Somavamśi and Eastern Ganga scripts of about the 7th century A.D. the box-head, as also the parallel continuation of the lower end of the vertical are present. In the Śāṅkāyana letter of the 4th century A.D., Traikūṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D., and the Maitraka, Western Cālukyan and Viṣṇukundin letter of the 6th century A.D. the small serif is present instead of a box-head. In the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions a wedge crowns the top of the vertical, the lower end of which is triangularly thickened. In the script of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions and the Pallava Nagari of the same date, the letter has a wedge on top and at the lower end it slightly shoots up from a point giving the shape of half an arrow. This continues in the 8th century Western Cālukyan script. In the 9th century Pratihāra and Pāla scripts the wedge is replaced by a serif; the vertical stroke slightly curves to right towards its lower end and shoots up again to left half way to form a compressed curved triangle; a similar feature is found also in the letter of Paramāra, Candella and Gāhaḍavāla scripts of the 11th-12th centuries; the vertical being straight, the triangle is also similarly formed in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. and the Sena letter of the 12th century A.D., in the latter case the triangle being filled in. In the Rāṣtrakūṭa and Eastern Ganga letter of the 9th and 11th centuries A.D. respectively the curved triangle is an open one, as the stroke running half way up vertically to left is absent. In Gujrat Cālukya and Yādava letter the triangle is an open one, as it lacks the lower half of the vertical, forming its right side. In the Kākatīya letter the triangle is again open, as the small central horizontal stroke joining the left slanting stroke is absent, making the letter look like half an arrow head. In the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. a slanting stroke to left is absent and the triangle is again open.

In the Canarese area the 6th century Western Cālukyan letter is composed of a vertical stroke crowned by a small serif stroke, its lower end being bent and running parallel half way up. In the Rāṣtrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. this parallel stroke proceeds right up to meet the serif that extends to meet it. In the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. and thereafter the serif becomes crescent-shaped and separated from the body which becomes circular.

The development is not very different in the Telugu area, except that in the 10th century A.D. Eastern Cālukyan script the letter is an oval with serif on top, which in the 11th century A.D. becomes an oval with 'V'-shaped serif on top. In the 12th century Kākatīya script and later the serif is crescent-shaped.

In Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the letter is shaped like a test tube, being composed of two long parallel lines joined at the top and the bottom. The top becomes open in the letter of the next century. It is again joined in the rather short Coḷa letter of the 11th century

A.D. In the Pāṇḍya letter of the 13th century A.D. the top and the bottom line extend slightly to left and in the 15th century Vijayanagara letter the top stroke not only extends but also climbs down slightly.

In Tamil all these developments are present but there is only one vertical stroke.

In the Vatteḷuttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter is a vertical that starts with a hook to left top and slightly slants to right and continues so in the 11th century Coḷa script.

La.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 57) is like an upturned, left-facing beaked hook. The curvilinear base is flattened in the letter of the Tamil caves. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script the letter is like reversed 'N' with stroke to right top. The Kuṣāṇ letter of the 2nd century A.D. has a flattened base and is angular, not curved. In the contemporary Kṣātrapa and Sātavāhana letter the beak curves, the base is flat and the right vertical stroke either curves in or out slightly. In the Ikṣvāku letter which is almost similar the base medially curves in and the long right vertical is straight, curving in only at the top end. In the Northern variety of Gupta script a vertical with serif on top forms a deep curve to the left from its base; the Central Indian variety is more or less like the Ikṣvāku letter, but with the line of curve of the vertical deeper and its end almost reaching the curved beak. The form of the letter in almost all the scripts from the 4th to the 6th century A.D., like Kadamba, 3rd to 4th century Pallava, Vākāṭaka. Western Ganga, Nala, Viṇṇukunḍi and Western Cāḷukya is almost the same, except in Śāṅkākāyana, Maitraka, Eastern Cāḷukya, Eastern Ganga and Somavamśi scripts of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. where the top curve encircles the letter all around except the base. In the Somavamśi and in one ornamental variety of Pallava Grantha of about the 7th century A.D. the curved stroke proceeds angularly and produces the effect of an open rectangle. The Traikūṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. and the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions of a century later have just a small vertical stroke to the right which does neither shoot up and curve or encircle the body of the letter. There is also a wedge present at the top end of the stroke in the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions. In the Nagari letter of the 7th century of the inscriptions of Harṣhavardhana and the Pallavas, the wedge is more defined and the base line slants up to left before curving, and the vertical is somewhat lengthened downward. The Western Cāḷukyan letter of the 8th century A.D. is almost like the other two, and even in the 11th century Paramāra letter the wedge is present. In the Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa letters of the 9th century A.D. the curved beak of the letter is lengthened downwards somewhat to right. From the 11th century onwards the small base line also curves and thus a double curve is found to the left of the vertical. In the Sena script of the 12th century the double curve is absent and the central horizontal stroke parallel to its serif curves to left. The Yādava and Kākatīya letter of the 13th century A.D. and the Vijayanagara letter of two centuries later are shorter and broader.

In the Canarese area the early Western Cāḷukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. develops into a buxom thing in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script three centuries later, which starts as a hook

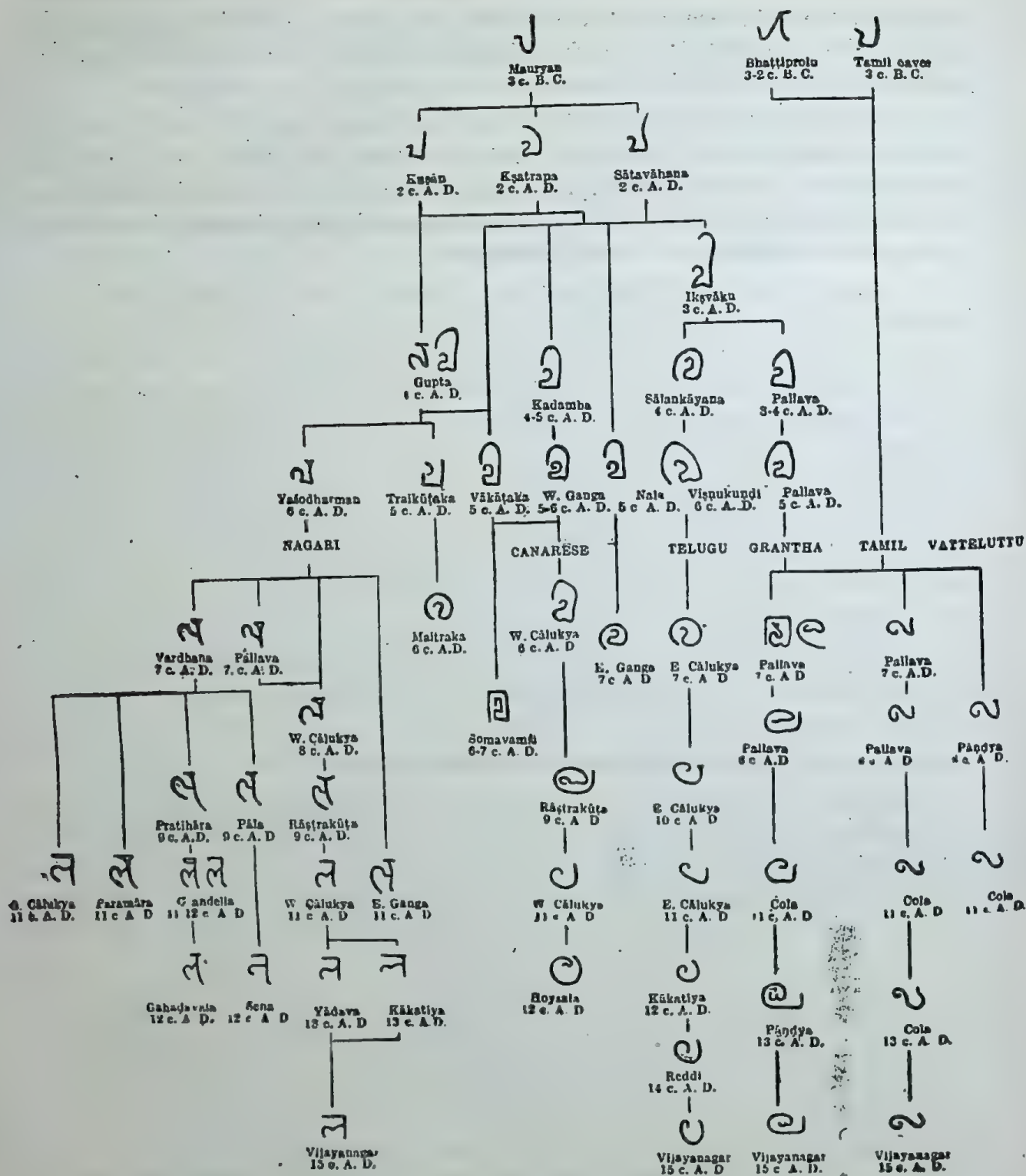


FIG. 57.

C. S. del.

running into a slightly double bent base line that curls up to the left, encircling the body on all sides. In the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala letter of the 11th and 12th century A.D. respectively, the body of the letter dwindles and the whole thing is an encircling curl.

In the Telugu area the beaked hook of the 7th century Eastern Cālukyan letter curls and encircles the body up to the base, as in the earlier forms. But in the 10th century A.D. the letter is more or less like its Western Cālukyan cousin of a century later, though it has specially in addition a small serif at the end of the curl that shoots up vertically. The further development of the letter is as in the Canarese area.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. one type of letter is composed of a small vertical slanting to left with forked top, curving to left and forming a belly, the base of which is slightly arched and the line continues at first vertically, then horizontally and vertically again surrounding the body of the letter by something like an open rectangle; the other is a small double curve continued on top to half encircle it. The latter type is found in the 8th century A.D. with the small double curve almost straightened and continuation of the line encircling it, flattened at the base, and drawn vertically to fully surround the body. In the 11th century letter, which is very similar to this, the straightened double curve diminishes further; but in the 13th century A.D. the double curve reappears with marked distinctiveness and the base line as well as its vertical terminal are quite straight and this continues even in the Vijayanagara period.

In Tamil of the 7th century A.D. it is like reversed 'S', with bottom end somewhat curled with top slightly flattened and laid on its back. This form is more or less repeated in all later development.

In Vaṭṭeḷuttu the letter is not different from that of Tamil.

Va.—The letter (Fig. 58) of the Maurya script and of the early Tamil caves is a circle with a vertical, placed centrally right on its top. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is pear-shaped with top stroke to left. The Kuṣāṇ letter is an equilateral triangle with the top crowned by a small wedge. The equilateral triangle in the Sātavāhana letter and the pear-shaped body in the Kṣatrapa letter are crowned by a very small serif vertically. The Ikṣvāku letter, which is similar to the earlier Sātavāhana, has a small inward curve in the centre of the base. The Northern variety of Gupta letter is based on the Kuṣāṇ type; but the Central Indian type is a rectangle with right side continued up and crowned with a box-head. The letter in the Kadamba—Vākaṭāka scripts of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. and the Somavamśi script of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. is similar to the Central Indian Gupta variety, except that the last is compressed and elongated. The Nala and Pallava letter of the 5th century and Eastern Ganga of the 7th century A.D. have also a box-head but the belly of the letter has the contour of a fig. The letter of Śāṅkāyana and Pallava Prakrit charters is more or less after the Ikṣvāku letter. The belly of the letter in Western Ganga, and Pallava (5th century A.D.),

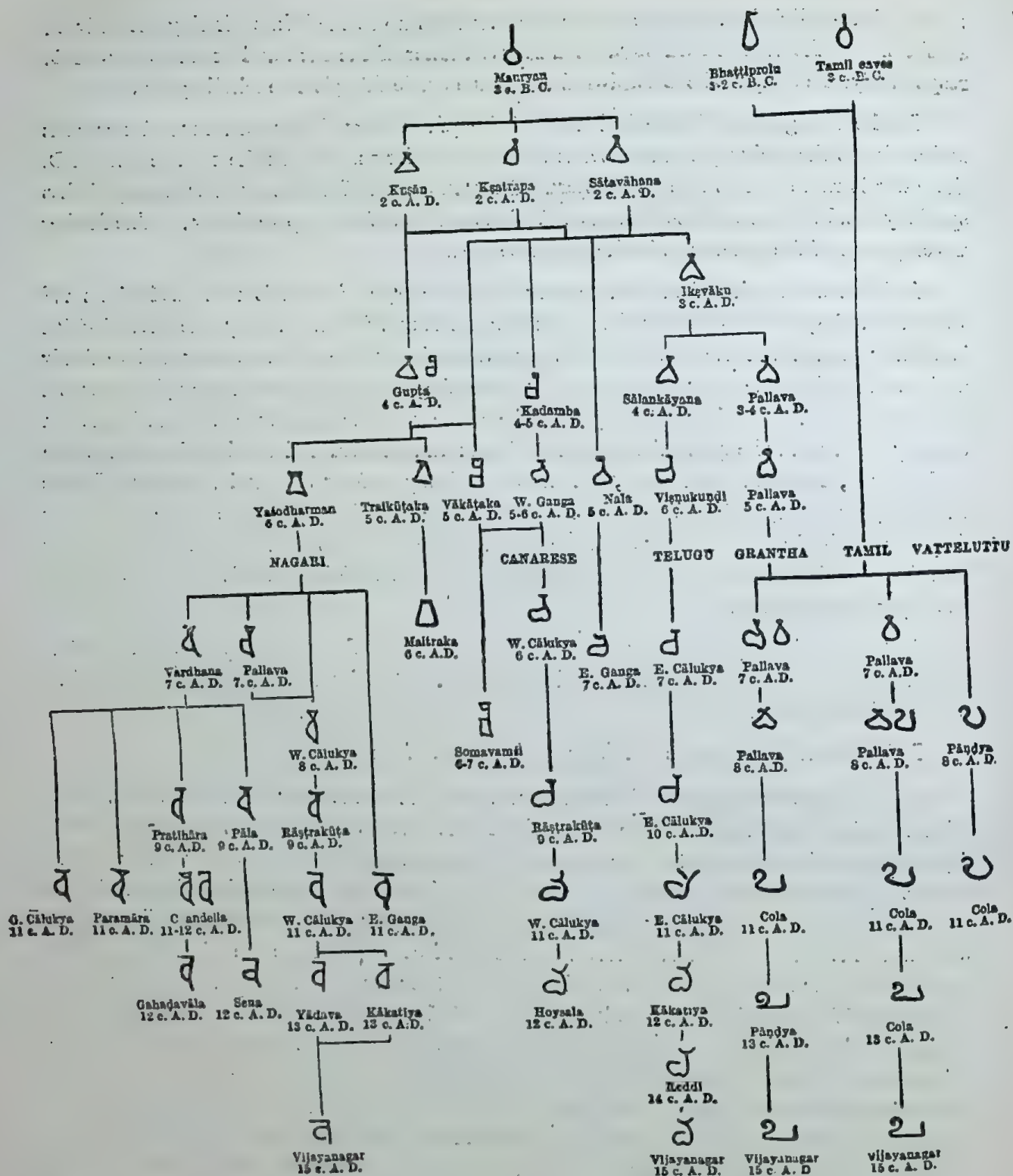


FIG. 58.

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Viṣṇukūṇḍin and Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D., and in Eastern Ganga and Eastern Cālukyan of the next century, has a median inward curve at the base line. The Traikūṭaka and Maitraka letter is more or less triangular, with top angle slightly chipped to take a thick serif. Yaśodharman's inscriptions reveal a similar letter.

The Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D., as seen in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, is more or less like the contemporary letter *ba*. The Pallava letter of the time is however not like the *ba* of the same script but almost like the contemporary Vardhana *ba*. The wedge crowns the letter. All the later developments of this letter in Nagari are like those of corresponding *ba*, except in Yādava and Vijayanagara letter of the 13th and 15th century A.D. respectively, where the stroke in the belly of the letter *ba* is absent in *va*.

In Canarese area, the early Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. is after the Western Ganga type. The letter is almost of the same type in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script three centuries later but in the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter, the belly of the letter slightly opens, the tip of the line forming the belly not touching the vertical which curves just a little to left, its top being crowned with the serif changed into crescent shape. The letter continues so in the 12th century Hoysala script.

The development of the letter in the Telugu area is not different from that in the Canarese area except in the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. which has a 'V' shaped serif.

Of two varieties of the letter in Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D., one is almost like the Western Cālukyan letter of the previous century, except that the serif of the Pallava letter is forked. The second variety is pear-shaped with a thick small serif. In the Pallava letter of the next century, the pear-shaped letter becomes more buxom and develops a median inward curve on the base, the serif being split into two tiny spokes. In the 11th century A.D., the base line straightens and the letter completely opens and it looks like contemporary *u* with the tail-end elongated vertically somewhat. This form continues during the later centuries.

In Tamil, the development of the letter is not different from that in Grantha.

In Vaṭṭe'ettu, the base line of the Tamil letters curves out a bit, making the letter take the outer contours of a goose.

Śa.—This (Fig. 59) is shaped like an arrow mark in Mauryan script. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter has a top stroke to the left in addition. The Kuṣāṇ letter of the 2nd century A.D. is horse shoe-shaped with a line across in the middle. The contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letter is horse-shoe shaped with a small medial curvilinear vertical stroke. The Śālan-kāyana letter of the 4th century A.D. is a horse-shoe with a stroke across its belly. The contemporary Pallava letter of the Prakrit charters has a small base stroke added to the left

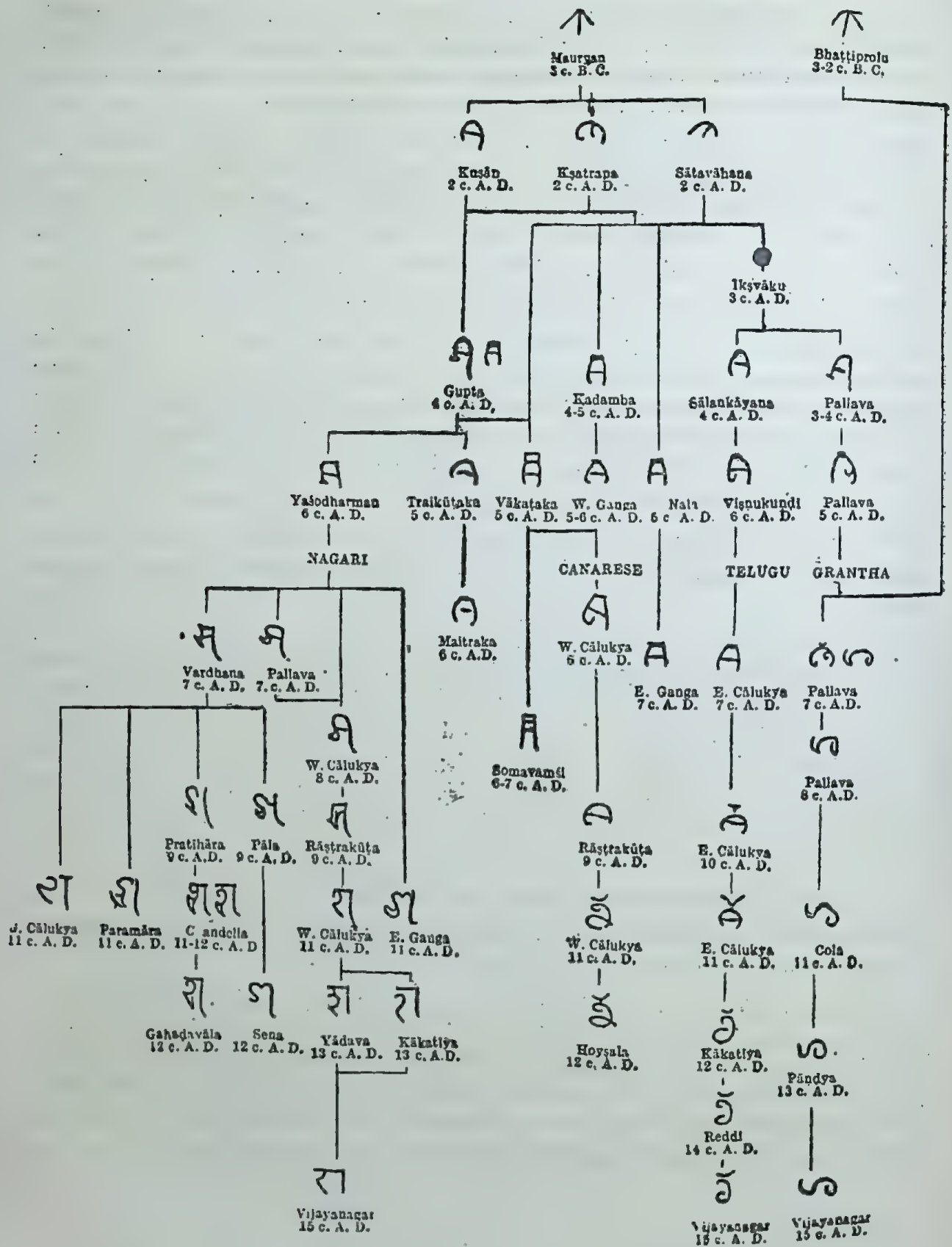


FIG. 59.

C.S. del.

arm of the horse-shoe and the right arm is lengthened straight down somewhat. In the Gupta script of the northern variety this is repeated. In the Central Indian variety it is the horse-shoe with stroke across the belly and the box-head on top. The Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Western Ganga and Pallava letters of about the 5th century A.D., the compressed elongate Somavamśi letter of the 6th-7th century A.D. and the Eastern Ganga letter of the 7th century A.D. have the box-head top and resemble the Central Indian Gupta variety, except the Pallava which has no stroke across its belly but just a small curl added centrally to the right arm on the inside. The Traikūṭaka, Viṣṇukūṇḍin, Maitraka, Western Cālukyan letters of the 5th-6th centuries and Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. are similar but lack only the box-head; but the left arm of the Viṣṇukūṇḍin and the Western Cālukyan letter curves in terminally. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is after the letter of the Northern variety of the Gupta script. In all these varieties of script till the 9th-10th centuries A.D., this letter is practically the same as *ga* with either a central stroke across or a curl to right. The Nagari letter of the 7th-8th century A.D. is just *ga* with a stroke across the belly. The letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, the Pallava letter of the 7th century A.D., the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D., the Raṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. are thus similar to *ga* with a stroke in addition. The Pratiḥāra and Pāla letter of the 9th century A.D. show some difference; there is no top horizontal and the left arm curves in at the top in the case of the former and the left arm joins the right vertical centrally after curving in somewhat in the case of the latter. The Gujrat Cālukya letter has again no top horizontal, the vertical stroke alone having a small serif, and the left limb curves to left and slants down to right. The Paramāra letter is more or less like the Pratiḥāra one, except that the top curve of the left limb comes closer to the vertical and the curved triangular lower terminal of the same is larger. In the Candella letter the left limb has both a top curl to left and a leaf-like lower terminal different from that of the left limb of *ga* of the same script. The Western Cālukyan *śa* of the 11th century A.D. is curved to left top and slants down somewhat, as in the Gujrat Cālukya letter but there is the top horizontal stroke. There is a double bump on top for Eastern Ganga *śa* instead of a single one as in *ga*. The Gāhaḍa-vāla letter is more or less like the Western Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D. The Sena letter of the 12th century A.D. has a double bump instead of a single bump as in *ga*. The Yādava and Kākatiya letter of the 13th century and the still later Vijayanagara letter are modifications of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D.

The Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. already described changes into a buxom horse-shoe with stroke across the belly in the Raṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. In the 11th century the Western Cālukyan letter begins almost as a small top curl curving to right and forming a large loop below; above the top curl is a crescent-shaped serif. The Hoysala letter a century later is similar.

In the Telugu area the early Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D., which is a horse-shoe with stroke across the belly, becomes a buxom letter in the 10th century exactly like the Rāṣṭrakūṭa one of a century earlier but with the addition of a wedge-shaped serif above it. In the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. the serif becomes 'V' shaped and in the Kākatīya script of the 12th century A.D. and thereafter the letter is like the one in contemporary Canarese area.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. one type is shaped like a horse-shoe with small wedge-shaped serif on top or simpler still, like contemporary *ga* and has a small curl on the inside to the right instead of the central stroke across. Another is just like contemporary *ga* with the right terminal curved in almost to form a loop. The letter of the next century has similar characteristics; the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D. and subsequent developments of it show the letter almost like *ga* with the right terminal curved in.

Ṣa.—The Mauryan letter (Fig. 60) is a hook with a central curved upward stroke. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is a hook with a very small central and top stroke to left. The letter in Kuṣāṇ script of the 2nd century A.D. is a square with top open and with a central stroke across. The contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letter has a small stroke across to the left of similar open square. The Gupta letter of the Northern variety is a narrow oval with serif on top and with a stroke running down slanting to right from it and shooting up vertically. The Central Indian variety is like contemporary *pa* with stroke across belly. In all the early forms of the letter, as in Kadamba, Śāṅkākāyana of about the 4th century A.D.; in Vākāṅka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukūṇḍin, Maitraka, and Western Cālukyan of about the 5th-6th centuries A.D.; and in Eastern Ganga, Somavamśi and Eastern Cālukyan of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. the letter corresponds to the *pa* of the series with the addition of a central stroke across. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is not different, though in the Traikūṭaka and Maitraka letter the stroke on the belly slants down slightly. In the Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's time and in the Pallava inscriptions, the central stroke slants down slightly. Similarly it slants slightly in the 8th century Western Cālukyan, 9th century Pratihāra and Pāla letter, and more prominently in 11th century Paramāra, Candella, Western Cālukya and Ganga, 12th century Gāhādavāla and 13th century Yādava and Kākatīya letter. The stroke is quite horizontal in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D., 11th century Gujrat Cālukya letter and 12th century Sena letter. In the 15th century Vijayanagara letter the stroke is more vertical than slanting. In all these the addition of the stroke, whether slanting or horizontal, distinguishes the letter from *pā*.

In the Canarese area the stroke across distinguishes the letter in the early Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D. and in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script three centuries later. In the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. and thereafter, the horizontal stroke is present, as it actually joins the curve composing the belly to the right vertical.

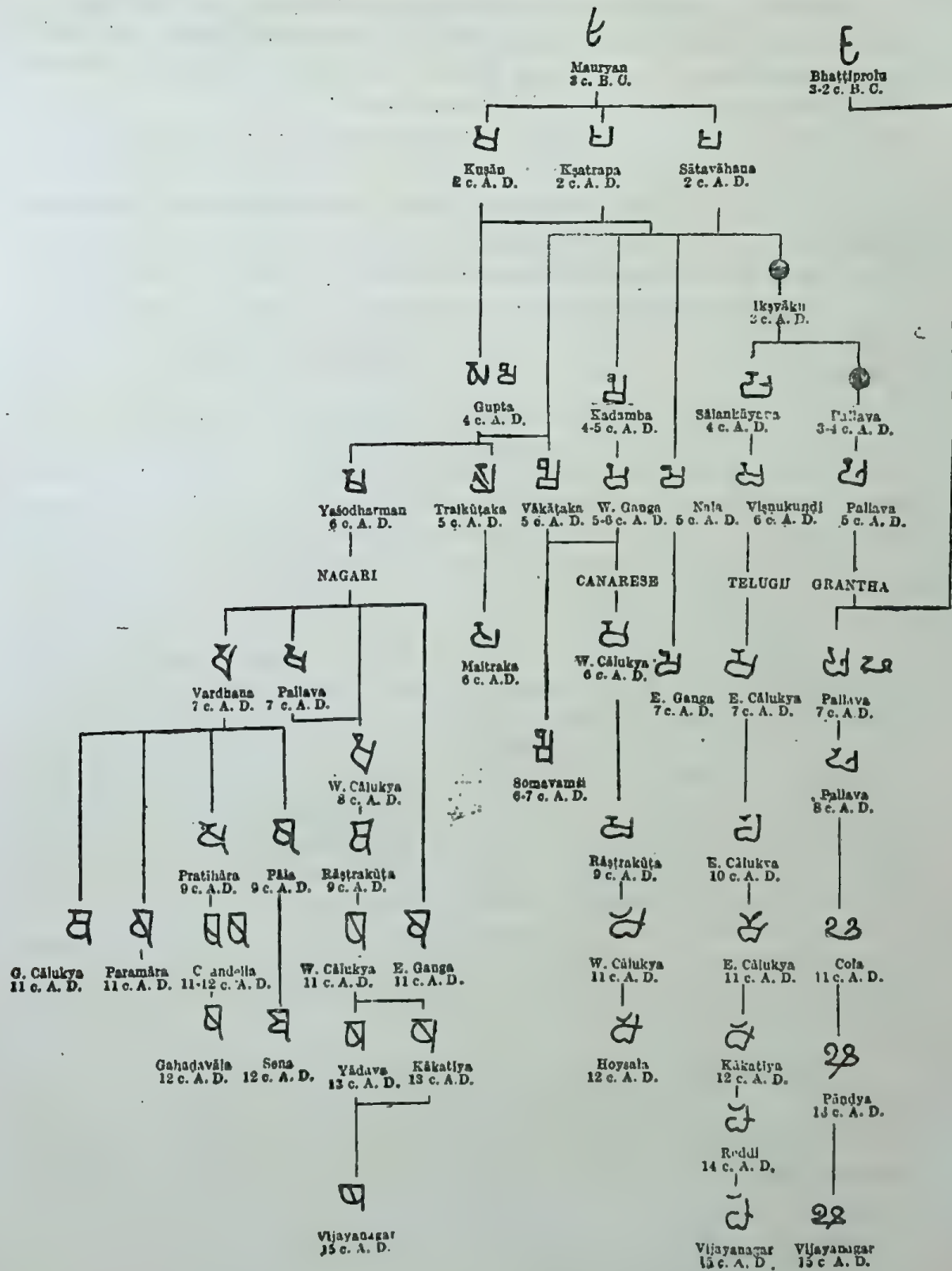


FIG. 60.

C.S. det.

In the Telugu area the development of the letter is as in the Canarese area except that in the 11th century Eastern Cālukyan script it has a 'V' shaped serif. In the 14th century Reddi script and later the central horizontal stroke has a break in the centre, though its terminal cuts the vertical and extends slightly beyond it.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. the letter is just like *pa* of the same time with a small curve added on the inside to the right in one variety and the right terminal looped in another. In the 8th century the inward curve to the right continues. In the 11th century Coḷa script and thereafter the right end of the letter slants in upwards, forms a loop, and runs down again slightly to left first almost touching the base line and later cutting it.

Sa.—In Mauryan script the letter (Fig. 61) is more or less like a triskelis, except that the top limb is straight and not curved like the other two. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu script there is a stroke added to the top right of the letter. In the Ku-āṇ, K-atrapa and Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the letter becomes more buxom, the vertical stroke is shorter and has a small wedge-like serif at its top, the curved limb to left slants down slightly to right and the right curved limb shoots up to very nearly the wedge of the vertical. The Ikṣvāku letter is somewhat compressed. The Northern variety of Gupta letter is composed of a stroke that starts with the wedged serif, forms a loop to left, slants slightly to right and shoots up vertically. The Central Indian variety shows the letter with a box-head replacing the serif. The Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Western Ganga and Pallava letter of the 5th century A.D. and the Somavamśi and the Eastern Ganga letter of about the 6th-7th centuries A.D. have the box-head. The rest of the earlier types, like Śāṅkayana and Pallava of about the 4th century A.D., the Traikūṭaka, Viṣṇukunḍin, Maitraka and Western Cālukyan of the 5th-6th centuries A.D. have the small serif. The letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions is more or less like the Northern form of Gupta letter with a filled-in triangle instead of the loop to the left. From this is derived the Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, with a pronounced wedge and triangle to left, slanting horizontal stroke and right vertical, slightly elongated towards the lower end. The contemporary Pallava Nagari letter has the triangular part opened up and this continues in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D., where the slanting line connecting the right and left limbs curves in. The wedge to left in these letters is replaced by a small serif in the Pratihāra letter of the 9th century A.D. In the Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa, Gujrat Cālukya, Paramāra, Candella, Eastern Ganga and Gāhaḍavāla letter the small serif is replaced by one that extends to meet the top end of the right limb of the letter and the triangular part to left is open. The Paramāra letter shows the wedge or triangular head at the top end of the left limb in addition to the horizontal serif stroke. The Sena letter shows the triangular part not open as in the rest but compressed and diminutive. In Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D., the Yādava and Kākatīya letter of the 13th century A.D. and the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. the curve connecting the left and right limbs is replaced by a horizontal right across in the centre of the letter.

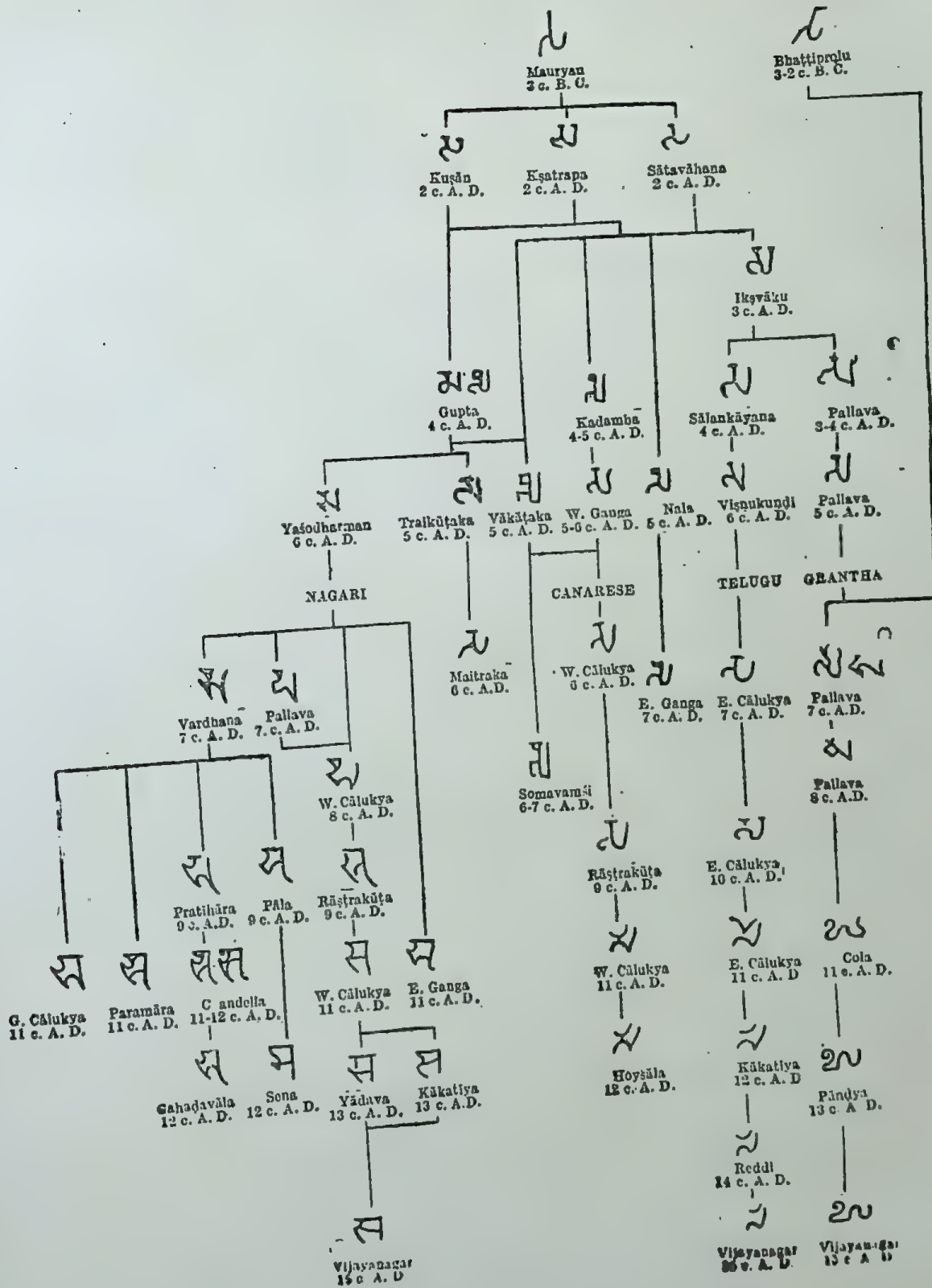


FIG. 61.

C.S. del.

In the Canarese area the form of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. is continued in almost the same manner even three centuries later but in Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. the vertical drops out and the serif changes into a crescent immediately above where the small curved left limb curves down again and shoots up slantingly to right as the right limb. This form continues in the Hoysala letter of the next century.

The development of the letter in the Telugu area is not very different from that in the Canarese area except that the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D. has a small wedge-shaped serif and the letter of the next century a 'V' shaped one.

In the Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century, there is one type showing the earlier in a more ornamented manner and with the top of the vertical forked and thickened; the other composed of a stroke slanting down to left and again to right and curving to slant down again to right and rise vertically. The Pallava letter of the next century shows the same type, with its angle formed by straight lines and with a rectangle formed immediately below the serif to left. In the 11th century Coḷa script, the letter sheds its angularity, starts as reversed 'S' to left, curves up and down, and ends as a vertical to right. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya script the reversed 'S' shaped part develops a curl at the top, flattens at the base and continues almost as in the earlier Coḷa letter. The Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. is not different from this.

Ha.—In Mauryan script *ha* (Fig. 62) is just like *la* reversed; in Bhaṭṭiprolu script a top left stroke is added as usual. In the 2nd century script of the Ku āṇs, Kṣatrapas and Sātavāhanas the vertical stroke is shorter and thickened at the top end and slightly curved in, the bottom widened, flat and angular and the beak curved. The Ikṣvāku letter is very much after the Sātavāhana letter though a little more compressed. The Northern variety of Gupta letter is like an inverted question mark without dot and with a small serif added instead. The Southern variety shows the letter with top half of the left vertical stroke indented, as in *pa*, and crowned with a box-head. The curve of the beak is rather raised and deep, as the terminal is prolonged downwards. The box-head occurs in the Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Somavamśi and the Eastern Ganga scripts as usual. In all these scripts of the 4th, 5th and 6th century the letter is more or less like its contemporary *pa* with the right vertical slightly shorter and curved down and the terminal prolonged downwards hook-like. The letter in Yaśodharman's script is almost like the rest of its date, except that the left vertical is not indented. In the Nagari letter of the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries A.D. the letter is more or less like *bha*, with the angularity at the bottom emphasised by a small stroke in continuation. This becomes a feature in all the later varieties of the letter.

The letter in the Canarese area, both in the 6th century Western Cālukya and 9th century Rāṣṭrakūṭa script, is more or less like the earlier form. In the 11th century Western Cālukya, 12th century Hoysala and later scripts, the curve to the right becomes more prominent at first and later tends to curl.

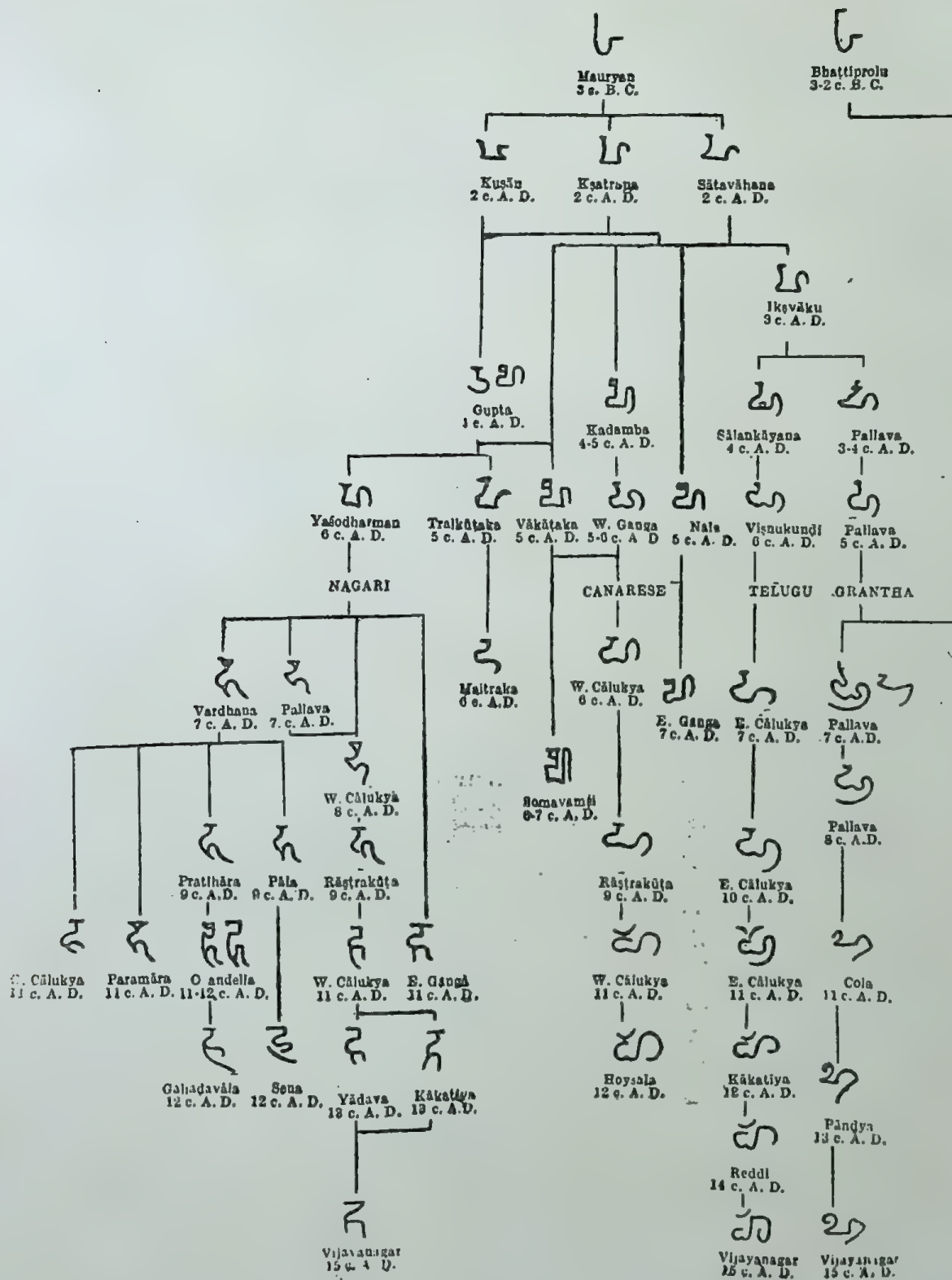


FIG. 62.

C.S. del.

This tendency in the development of the letter is to be observed in the Telugu territory also. And except for the usual 'V' shaped serif of the 11th century Eastern Cālukyan letter, there is no great difference between the letter of the contemporary Canarese and Telugu areas.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century the ornamental letter shows a forked terminal for the indented left vertical, a double curve at the base and the beak curves half way round the bottom. The second variety is simpler. The ornamental variety is developed in the 8th century as a somewhat simple one. In the 11th century Coḷa script the letter starts like contemporary 'u' with a hook and straight base line and slightly rises up to curve and slant down to left. This form of the letter continues in the 13th century Pāṇḍya and later still in Vijayanagara script.

La.—This letter (Fig. 63) occurs as already observed in Canarese, Telugu and Tamil areas. In the Telugu and Canarese areas it is more or less a circle dividing itself into two and curling its ends both sides topwards with an inward dent at the base.

The earliest Tamil form of the letter as observed in the cave inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C. is not materially different from the latest one and the letter has been practically the same all through the centuries. The Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter is also similar to the Tamil one.

La.—This letter (Fig. 64) is quite common in inscriptions of South India and the Deccan. It is closely related to the regular dental *la*; and this association is clearly preserved in the form of the letter even in Tamil cave inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C., where it resembles the letter *la* with just a vertical stroke, with its top slightly curved to join it, added to the right. The same scheme of the letter continues even later in Tamil inscriptions right from the 7th century A.D., where the later form of the Tamil letter *la* has a vertical stroke added to right. It is not different in Vaṭṭeḷuttu but as usual in this script the latter slants somewhat.

The letter of the Bhaṭṭiprolu script is a vertical curved at the base to right and having two small horizontal strokes to right at the top and in the middle. In Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D., it is developed from the earlier form represented at Bhaṭṭiprolu, the vertical bulging out in curvilinear shape to left and the middle stroke and basal curve transforming themselves conjointly into a fork shape. It is noteworthy that it occurs in the same shape in Kuṣāṇ and Kātrapa inscriptions and even in Gupta script. This characteristic form of the letter continues more or less the same in Gupta (4th century A.D.), Viṣṇukūṇḍin (6th century A.D.), Western Cālukya (6th century A.D.) and Rāṣṭrakūṭa (9th century A.D.).

The later Telugu letter is only a further transformation of this letter as observed in Viṣṇukūṇḍin alphabet (6th century A.D.). The Grantha letter of the Pallava inscriptions of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. is only a modification of this variety though the fork is

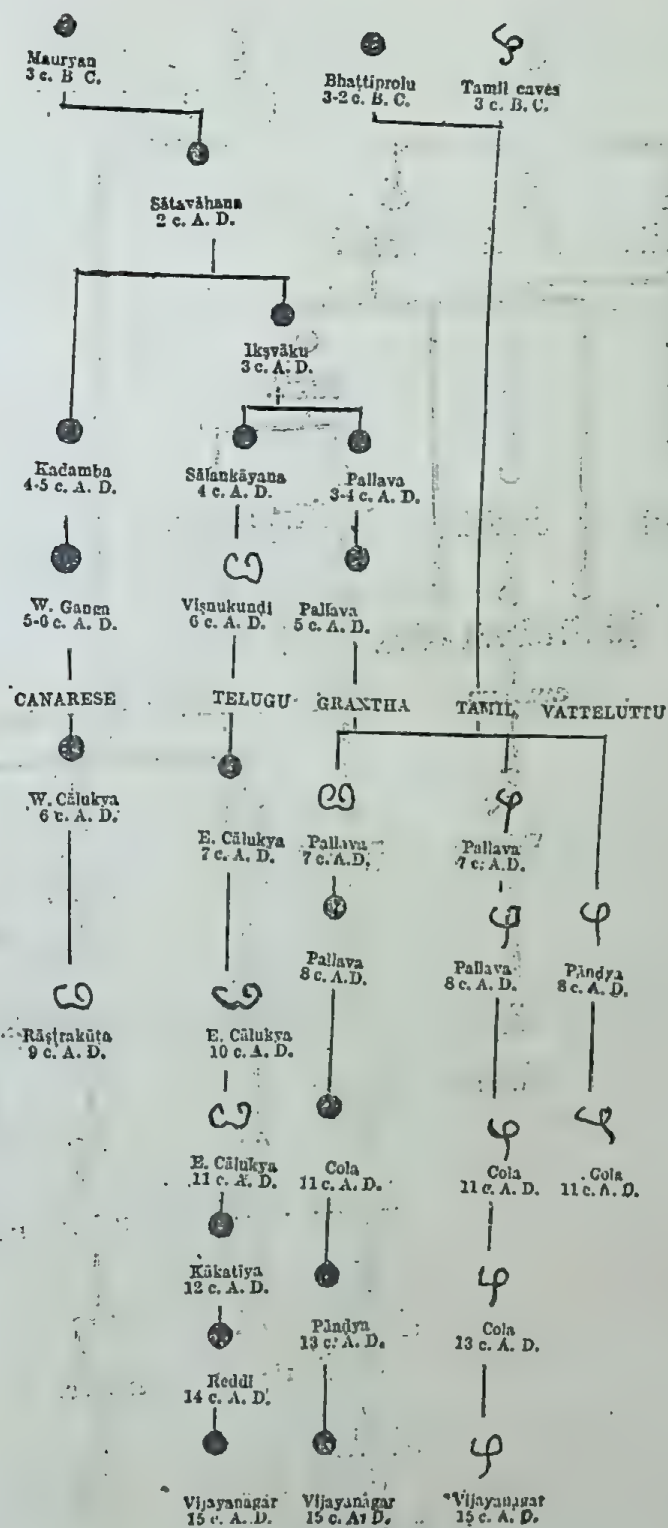


FIG. 63.

C.S. del.

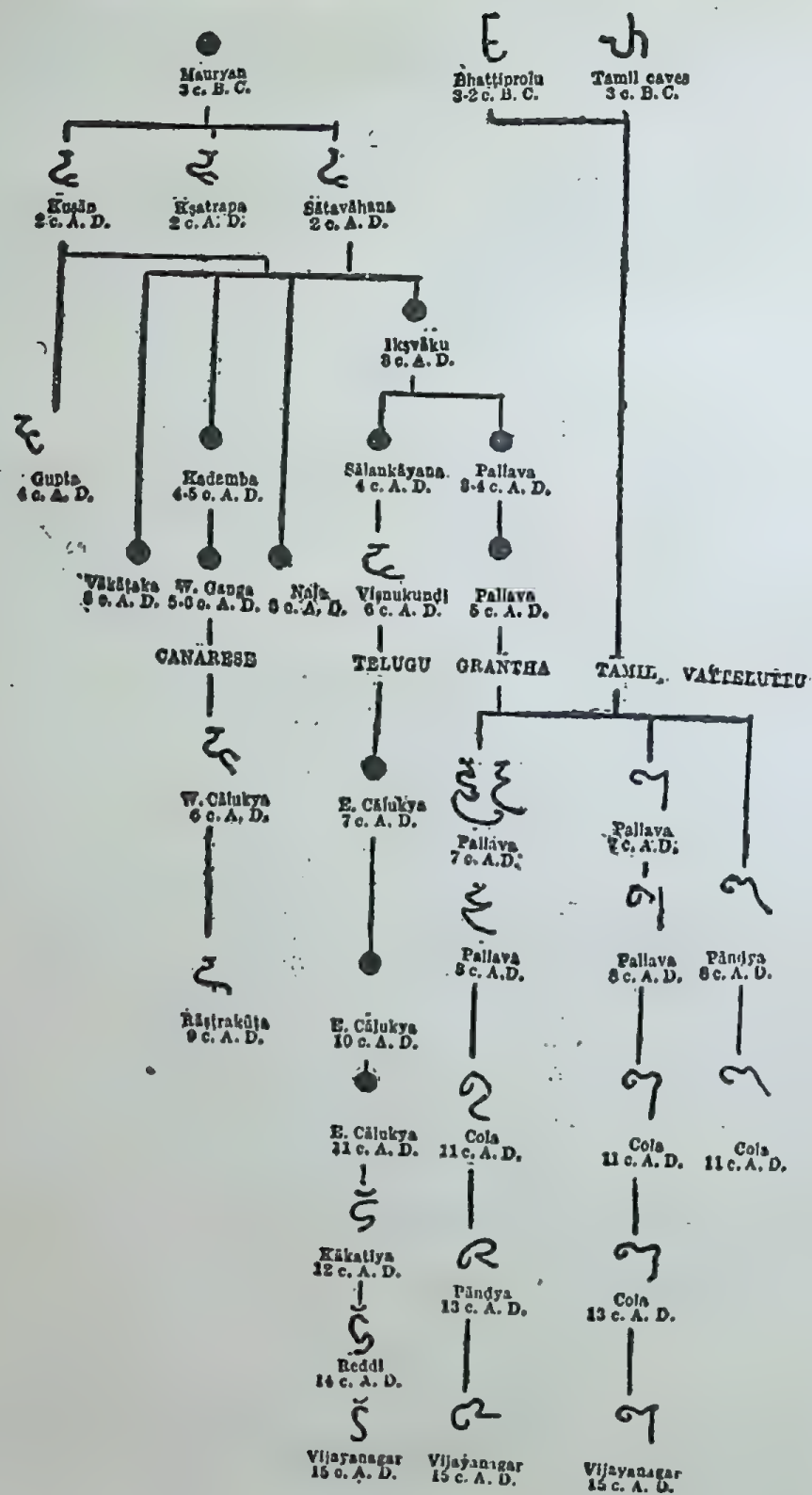


FIG. 64.

C.S. del.

changed into a broad curve drawn with a flourish. From the Cola period onwards the letter tends to take somewhat after the Tamil form. It resembles more or less a sickle in shape.

Ra.—This and the preceding two letters are peculiar to Canarese, Telugu and Tamil areas. This letter (Fig. 65) occurs so early as the 3rd century B.C., in the inscriptions of the Tamil caves where it is somewhat like a reversed and diagonally drawn Z with the addition of a lower stroke, a form which without the additional stroke is continued in Pallava Tamil script of the 7th and 8th century A.D. From this develops the sickle-shaped late letter of the Cola and Vijayanagar periods. The *Vat̤elett̤u* letter is after the Tamil one.

The basic form of this letter in the Canarese and Telugu areas is two circles, closely linked with a horizontal line running across them. In the initial stages it can be observed that it looks only like one circle separating into two at the bottom the separation being more complete at the top rather than at the bottom at a later stage. The name *śakatarepha* applied to this letter in Telugu is in complete accord with the formation of the letter with the two wheel-shaped circles and an axle-shaped cross stroke.

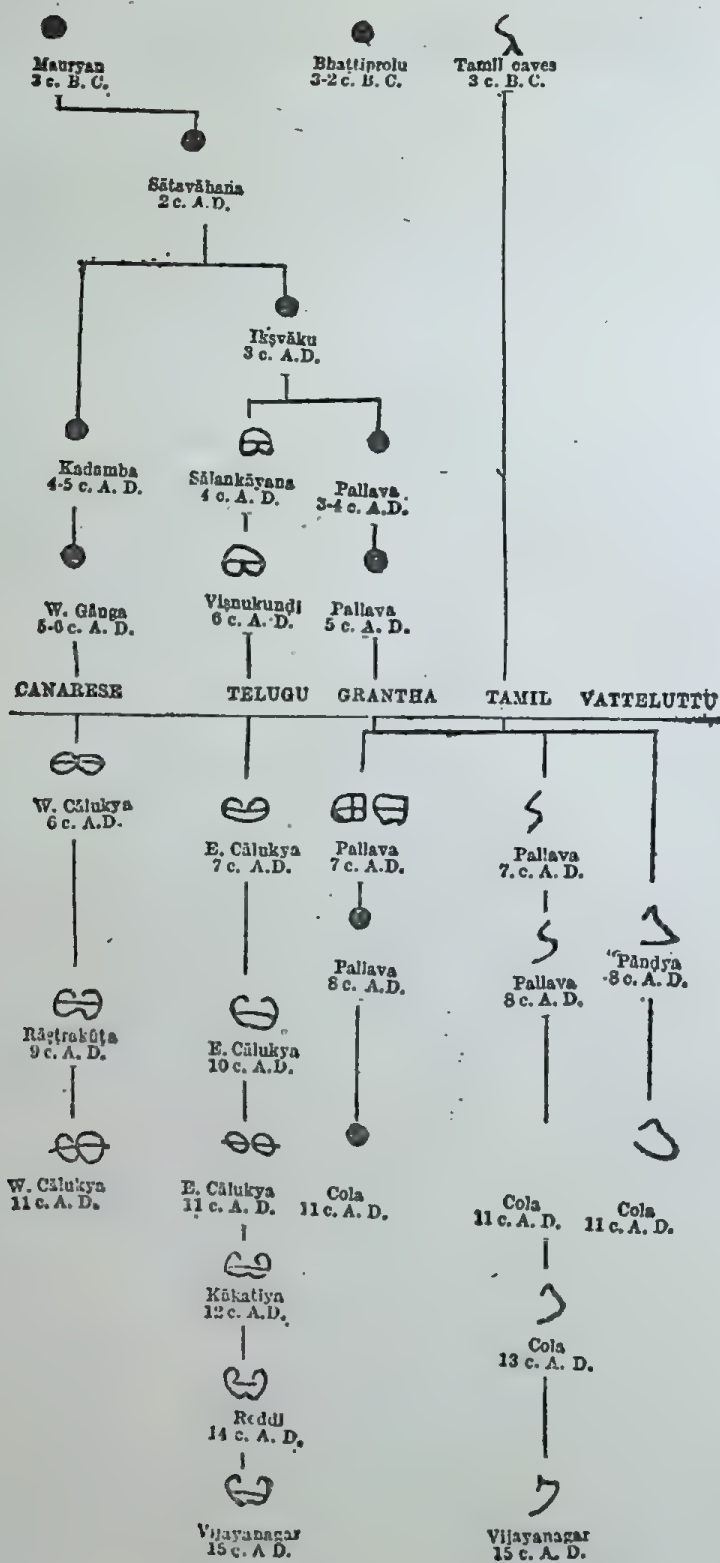


FIG. 65.

C.S. del.

SELECT PASSAGES FROM INSCRIPTIONS.

The earliest Brāhmī records yet discovered in India, as already pointed out, are the Piprahwa vase inscriptions and the writing on the Eraṇ coin. But from the third century B.C. the inscriptions of Aśoka form the most important records in that early script distributed all over the land. There are, as previously stated, local variations in the script used for the edicts of Aśoka incised on rocks and pillars. The passage given below (Fig. 66) is a small selection from one of the Mysore edicts of Aśoka or, more specifically, the Brahmagiri inscription in the vicinity of Siddāpura (Hultsch *C. Inscr Ind.* I. p. xxvii and 177—178) discovered by B. L. Rice during his explorations in Mysore. It is in the southern variety of the Aśoka script which is most pronounced at Siddāpura¹ and Girnar (*Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 34). Regarding the similarity between South Indian epigraphical document and those from Gujrat or Kathiawad, Bühler has drawn pointed attention to the grants of the Traikūtakas, Gurjjaras and the rulers of Valabhi where the letters are of the Southern type (*Epigraph. Ind.* III, p. 135). These inscriptions from Siddāpura area were written by a scribe called Capaḍa who must have served in Northern India, as the last letters of these are in the Northern Kharoṣṭhi alphabet to which he was accustomed. The use of *ra* here, instead of *la*, in places where ancient Māgadhī would require *la*, is one of the important points to be noted, as this is peculiar to the Southern variety of Prākṛt.

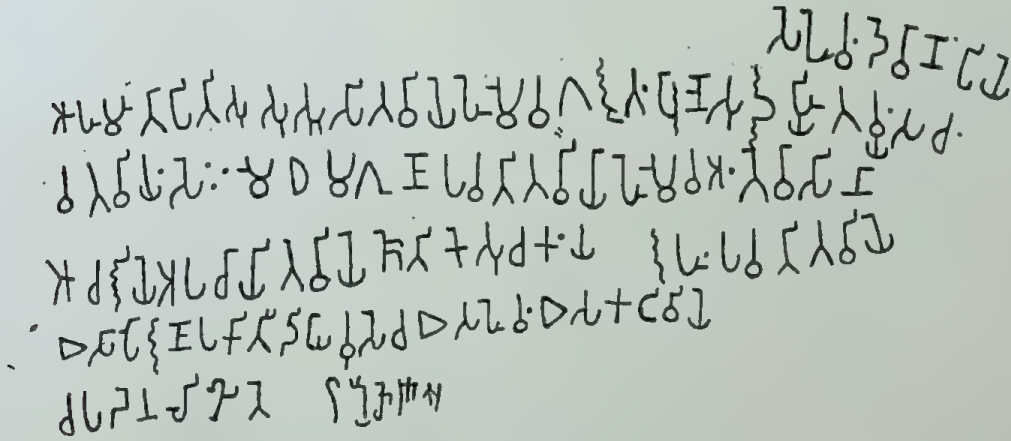


FIG. 66.

C.S. del.

से हेवं देवानं पिये
आह मातापितिसु सुसूतितविये हेमेव गरुतं प्राणेषु द्रष्टितव्यं सचं
वतवियं से इमे धमगुणा पवतितविया हेमेव अंतेवासिना
आचरिये अपचायितविये अतिकेसु च कं य[था]रहं पवतितविये

¹ Includes Siddāpura, Brahmagiri, Jaṭiṅga Rāmeśvara; the Maski and Yerraguḍi inscriptions should be added to this list.

एसा पोरणा पकिती दिघावुसे च एस हंवे एस कटिविये
चपडेन लिखिते लिपिकरेण ¹

The southern variety of Aśoka's script is only a variation of the usual type of letters found all over the land. But at Bhaṭṭiprolu, a village in the Krishna District, where A. Rea discovered inscriptions on stone caskets and a crystal piece from a stupa, the script is of a special variety (*Epigrāph. Ind.* II, p. 323). Some of the letters here are, as already pointed out, quite peculiar and differ substantially from letters of the Aśokan variety denoting the same values. The five abnormal letters *gha*, *ja*, *ma*, *la*, *ṣa*; the letter *ḷa*, altogether new to Aśokan Brahmi, but which continues in later Southern inscriptions like those of the Sāta-vāhanas and their successors in the Deccan, the abnormal horizontal stroke whose presence connotes lengthening of a consonant is the regular Aśokan variety,—are among the most noteworthy points of the Bhaṭṭiprolu script. The inscription given here (Fig. 67) is from the third casket. The lines in the centre are from the lid and the line running all around is from the edge of the lower or the box-portion of the casket.

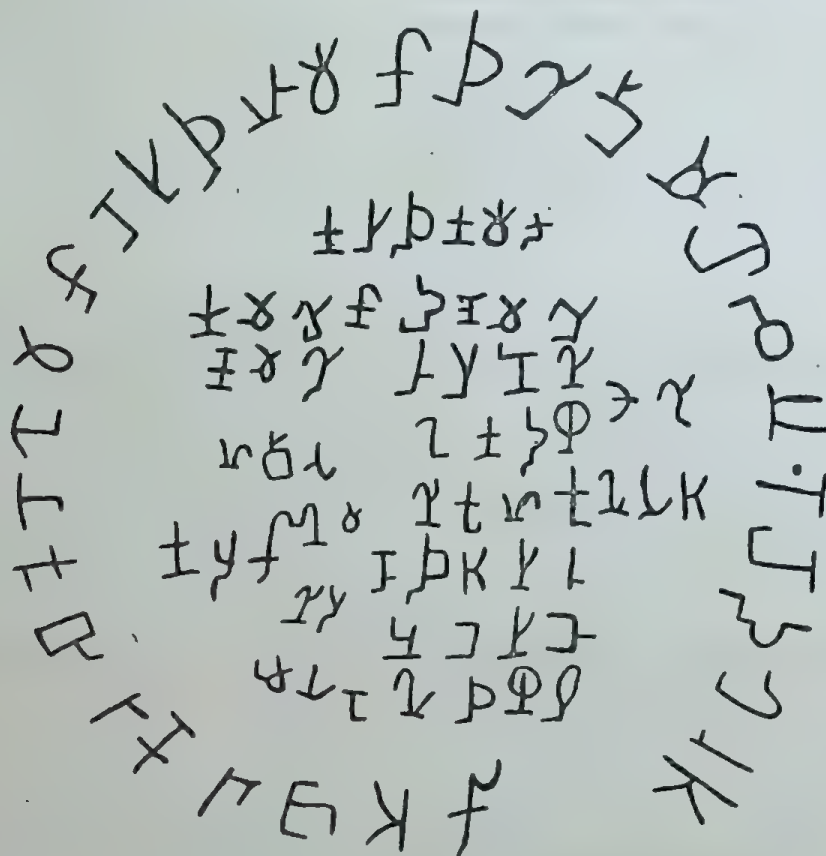


FIG. 67.

C.S. del.

¹ So says the Beloved of the Gods: Mother and father are to be waited on or honoured. Similarly respect for living creatures should be firm. Truth should be spoken. Even these virtuous qualities should be practised or cultivated. Similarly a pupil should be respectful to his teacher and to his blood relations he should behave befittingly. This is the ancient standard (of virtue), it is conducive to long life, and thus it has to be practised. Written by Capaḍa, the scribe.

On the lid—

नेगमा
वछो चघो
जेतो जभो तिसो
रेतो अचिनो षभिको
अखधो केलो केलो माहो
सेटा छदिको ओखबूलो
सोणुतरो समणो
समणदापो सामको
कामुको चीतको ¹

On the rim of the casket.

अरहदिनानं गोठिया मजूस च षमुगो च तेन कम येन कुविरको राजा अकि ²

The Brāhmī script clearly suggests its great antiquity in South India by the separate form of some letters in inscriptions found in caverns in South India, specially in the Pāṇḍyan country. Bühler felt that the southern variety of Brahmi, represented by the Bhaṭṭi-prolu inscriptions, should have had many varieties in the 3rd century B.C., an existence independent of the Aśoka edicts, and a long history of growth. This is supported by the letters in the puzzling inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyan country. Cammiade's discovery of a cavern with Brāhmī inscriptions at Marugaḷtalai, in Tirunelveli district, was followed by the discovery of many others. V. Venkayya, who examined the newly discovered ones, felt they were Buddhist caverns, the inscriptions being the earliest lithic records in the Tamil country and important for throwing valuable light on the origin and development of Tamil and Vaṭṭeḷuttu alphabets. Such caves with inscriptions were found in Virasīkhāmaṇi, Kongāpulyankuḷam, Muttuppaṭṭi, Āykuḍi and other places in Tirunelveli District; in Kaḷugumalai, Ānaimalai, Aḷagarmalai, Tiruparagunṇam, Kidaripaṭṭi, Kamjalakuḍi and others in Madurai District; and in Śittannavāsai in Pudukkoṭṭai State. H. Krishna Sastri tried his best to decipher them and published their impressions to enable decipherment. But their language has always been a puzzle. One of the discoverers of these caverns, K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, has given an explanation of these letters which is very interesting and plausible.³ According to him, the inscriptions are Buddhist and in

¹ Members of the guild—Vacha (Skt. *Vatsa*), Cagha, Jeta (Skt. *Jayanta*) Jambha (Skt. *Jambha*), Tisa (Skt. *Tisya*), Reta, Acina, Sabhika, Akhagha (Skt. *Aksaghna*), Kela (Skt. *Kesa*), Māha, Seṭa, Chadika (Skt. *Chandika*) Okhabūla, Soṇutara (Skt. *Sonottara*), Samana (Skt. *Sramana*), Samanadāsa (Skt. *Sramanadāsa*), Samaka (Skt. *Syāmaka*), Kāmuka, Citaka.

² A casket and box are given by the Council of followers of the venerable Arahadina (Skt. *Arhadatta*). The work is executed by him whom king Kubiraka got to prepare the carving.

³ The Pāṇḍyan country and the inscriptions in Proceedings and Transactions of the Third Oriental Conference, 1924.

the Tamil language. He has specially noted five letters of this alphabet, not known to the Aśokan inscriptions, and explained them as *ī*, *ṇa*, *la*, *ḍu*, and *r* all of them special to Tamil and Vaṭṭeḷuttu. Jouveau Dubreuil discovered at Arikameḍu, near Pondicherry, potsherds with inscriptions in letters similar to these, which await interpretation; and this extends the area of these inscriptions further north, thus covering almost the whole of the Tamil country. The discovery and interpretation of these inscriptions is one of the greatest contributions to Indian epigraphy and K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar has done a great service by his very valuable contribution. The present selection (Fig. 68) is from the Sittanavāśal cave and the inscription is typical of the rest.

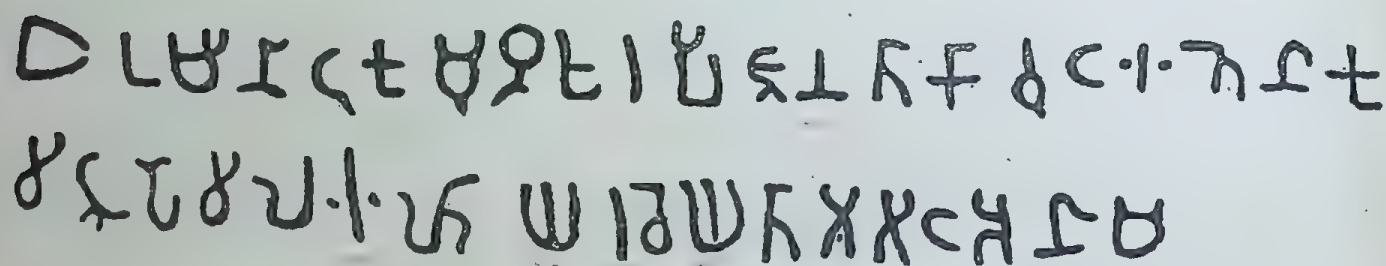


FIG. 68.

C.S. del.

எயி நாடு குமுணர பிறாந்தா காவடி ஈதென க் | ௫
சிறுபோசில இளயரசெயதா அதி அனம | ௩

The script of the early Kuṣaṇas, developed from that of the earlier epoch (Śodāsa, Rañjuvula, etc.), is characteristic for its squat letters, specially noticeable in *ha*, *ya*, *ṇa*, *bha*, *ca*, etc. There is a small nail-head serif for the letters. There is a tendency for the lower ends of all vertical strokes to remain straight, except in the case of *ra*. *E* is a triangle elongate topwise, *ba* a square, *va* a triangle with stroke over apex, *kha* a triangle with curve over the apex to left, *ma* a triangle with the sides lengthened beyond the apex and *tha* a circle. *Ā*, *e* and *o* medials are slanting top strokes to right, left and to both respectively. *Ya* has a curve in its left limb and as subscript the letter continues to be used in its complete form, i.e., tripartite. *Ca* projects its belly too far left. The tripartite subscript *ya* becomes bipartite in later Kuṣaṇ script. The present extract (Fig. 69) is from the inscription on the sides of the umbrella post for the Bodhisattva image erected by friar Bala at Banaras (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 176).

¹ Citupocil Ilayar made this *adhiṣṭhānam* for Kāvudī Iten who was born at Kumattūr, a village in Eomināḍu.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

FIG. 69.

C.S. del.

महाराजस्य कानिष्कस्य सं ३ हे ३ दि २२
 एताये पुवाये भिक्षुस्य पुण्यवुद्धिस्य सध्वेवि
 हारिस्य भिक्षुस्य बलस्य त्रेपिठकस्य
 बोधिसत्त्वो छत्रयष्टि च प्रतिष्ठापितो
 वाराणसिये भगवतो चकमे सहामाता
 पितिहि सहा उपध्यायाचेरेहि सध्वेविहारि^१

In the Western Indian caves, like Kārle, Kaṇheri, Kudā, etc., we get the archaic and clumsy variety as also a more advanced and beautiful variety of script. The Nāsik inscription of Uṣavadāta has excellent letters which contrast with the clumsy ones of his at Kārle. These letters resemble the early Mathurā variety. They have very few Southern characteristics though the Southern *ḍa* is clear. The curves at the lower end of vertical strokes are very faint, bringing them nearer the northern strokes which mostly lack the curves. The vertical stroke of *la* does not curve to the left but to the right top, the left limb of *sa* has a peculiar curve at its

^१ In the third year of Mahārāja Kaṇiṣka, the third (month) of winter, the twenty-second day, on this aforesaid day, the figure of Bodhisattva and an umbrella with handle (gifts) of the monk Bala, a master of the Tripitaka and fellow of the monk Puṣyavuddhi, was consecrated at Bārāṇasi (Banaras) at the Lord's promenade, with his father and mother, with his teachers and professors, his fellows....

tip; *śa* slants to the right; and subscript *ya* is tripartite. Medial *ā* and *e* are represented by horizontal strokes but occasionally, as in *jā*, the stroke curves upwards. Medial *u* and subscript *ra* are distinguished by the slight curvature in the case of the latter. Square patterns are obvious in letters like *pa*, *śa*, *ba*, *ha*, and triangles in *e*, *va*, *ma*. The present extract (Fig. 70) is from Uṣavadāta's inscriptions from Nāsik (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 78) the letters of which are among the finest in Indian epigraphy.

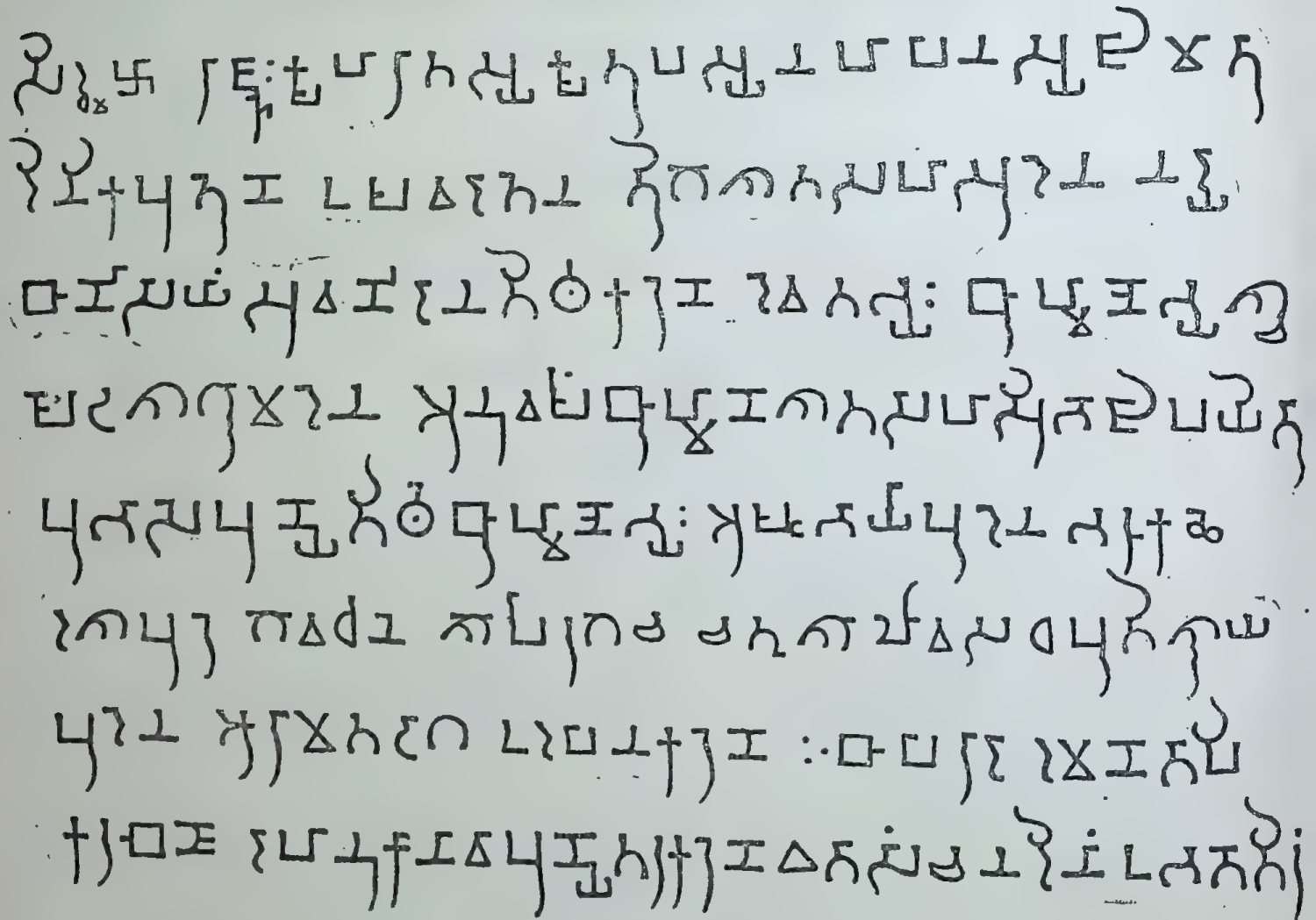


FIG. 70.

C. S. del.

सिद्धम् ॥ राज्ञः क्षहरातस्य क्षत्रपस्य नहपानस्य जामात्रा
 दीनीकपुत्रेण उषवदातेन त्रिगोशतसहस्रदेन नद्या
 बाणसियां सुवर्णदानतीर्थकरेण देवताभ्यः ब्राह्मणेभ्यश्च
 षोडशग्रामदेन अ वर्षं ब्राह्मणशतसहस्रीभोजापयित्रा

प्रभासे पुण्यतीर्थे ब्राह्मणेभ्यः अष्टभार्याप्रदेन भरुकुछे
 दशपुरे गोवर्धने शोर्पारंगे च चतुशालावसधप्रतिश्रय
 प्रदेन आरामतडाग उदपानकरेण इवा पारदा दमण तापी
 करेवणा दाहानुका नावापुण्यतरकरेण एतासां च नदीनां उभतोतीर¹

In Gujrat and Kathiawad the southern type of script was in vogue. This is indicated by the similarities in the Aśokan script from Girnār and from Mysore. The Southern form of script is also found in the Junāgaḍh inscription of Rudradāman (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 36). This forms an interesting study in tracing a later development of the Southern variety of Gupta script in Skandagupta's inscription in the same place. Rudradāman's inscription is one of the most important of Indian inscriptions as it is the earliest yet known in Sanskrit. This is a fine example of classical Sanskrit. The poet of the inscription, whom Kielhorn describes as 'endowed with no mean poetic power' is well acquainted with the diction of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* (Ibid, p. 40) and has used phrases bodily taken from the epics. As examples, may be noted पौरजानपदं जनं and पञ्चन्येन एकार्णवभूतायामिव पृथिव्यां कृतायाम् reminding of the lines पौरजानपदं जनं (*Ramayana*) and अयं बुत्सहते क्रुद्धः कर्तुमेकार्णवं जगत् (Ibid, V, 49, 20 and comment on this in Sivaramamurti 2, p. 4). *Sabdalamkara* abounds as for instance in quotations from this inscription, अविधेयानां यौधेयानां, दानमानावमान - नाज्ञा - दाज्ञा : रुद्रदाम्ना; etc. (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 41). The letters of this inscription appear to be the precursors of the Southern variety, the form being apparent in the curve at the lower end of the vertical strokes of *a*, *ā*, *kā*, *ñā*, and *ra*, the rounded form of *ḍa*, the leftward turn of the top vertical stroke of *la* and the form of medial *r* not easily distinguished from subscript *ra*. The letter *la*, peculiar to the Southern variety, occurs in this inscription. Though some of the letters of the Kṣatrapa and contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions like *a*, *ka*, *ñā*, *ra*, etc. have a little curve at the end of the verticals, a feature which is absent in Kusan letters, the verticals of the Kṣatrapa letters slant a little before curving at the tip. The use of final consonant is illustrated by *t* as in *āsīt*, the letter going just below the line. The subscript consonants are written in their normal full form. Medials *ā*, *e*, *o*, and *ai* are represented usually by horizontal strokes at the top of the consonant but sometimes this is different as in *ṭā*, *mā*, *dhā*, *mo*, etc., where the stroke curves up or down as in the first two and is added to the middle of the consonant as in the next two, or runs up vertical in continuation of the central part as in *jā*. Subscript *i*

¹ Success ! by Uṣavadāta, son of Dīnika, son-in-law of King Nahapāna the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa—donor of three hundred thousand cows, performer of sacred gifts of gold on the river Bārnāsā, giver of sixteen villages to the Gods and Brāhmaṇas, feeder all the year round of a hundred thousand Brāhmaṇas, giver of eight wives to Brāhmaṇas in the sacred place Prabhāsa, donor of quadrangular hermitages, dwellings and shelter houses* at Bharukacha, Daśapura, Govardhana and Śorparāga, maker of pleasure grounds, tanks and wells, founder of free ferries by boats on the *Ibā*, *Pārādā*, *Damana* *Tāpī*, *Karabēnā* and *Dāhānukā* and on both the banks of these rivers

*(On this see R. G. Bhandarkar in *Ind. Ant.* XII, p. 142.)

is represented by an upward curve on top to the right and \bar{i} by curved strokes to right and left. Medial u is represented by a bottom curve or stroke to the right of consonants with open bottom or having a single vertical stroke, as in *gu*, *tu*, etc. or *ku*, but otherwise it is turned to the left as in *mu*, *su*, etc.; *ru* and *rū* however are represented by a single or double stroke to the right centre of the vertical stroke of *r*. The additional stroke to denote subscript \bar{u} may be seen in *bhū*. The following small passage. (Fig. 71) is typical of the rest of this long well-engraved though damaged inscription. (Ibid, pp. 38-39).

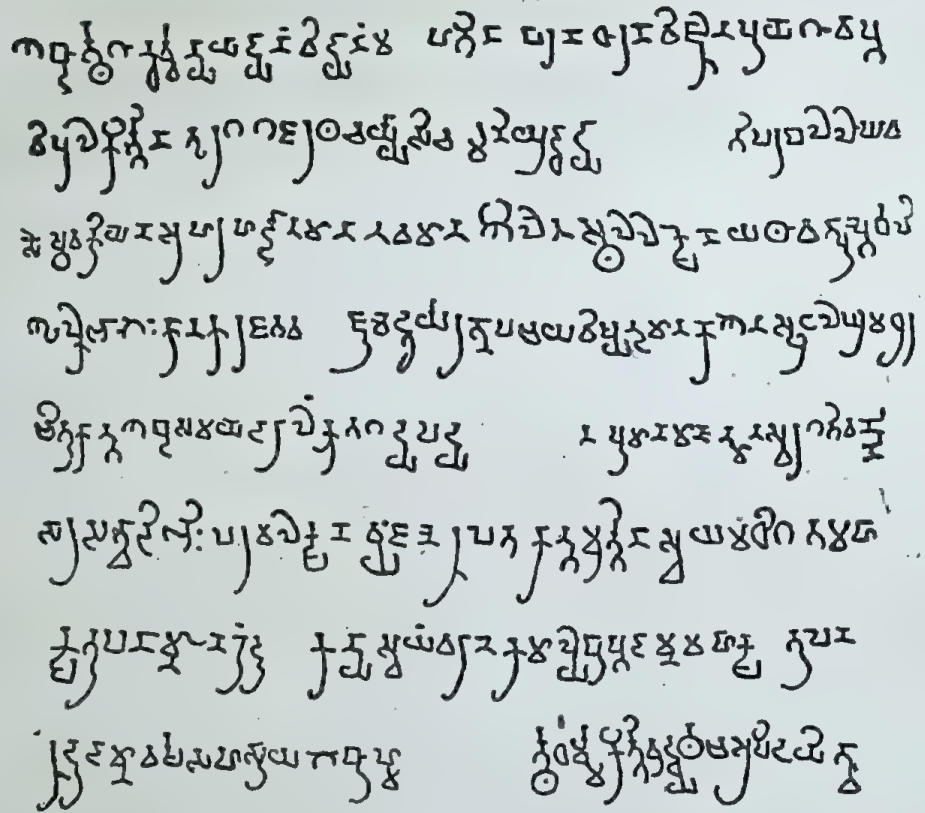


FIG. 71.

C.S. del.

शब्दार्थगान्धर्वन्यायाद्यानां महतीनां पारणधारणविज्ञानप्रयोगावाप्त
विपुलकीर्तिना तुरगगजरथचर्यासिचर्मनियुद्धाद्या तिपरबललाघव
सौष्ठवक्रियेण अहरहर्दानमानानवमानशीलेन स्थललक्षण यथावत्प्राप्तैर्बलि
शुल्कभागैः कनकरजतवज्रवैद्यैर्दूरलोपचयविष्यन्दमानकोशेन स्फुटलघुमधुर
चित्रकान्तशब्दसमयोदारालंकृतगद्यपद्य न प्रमाणमानोन्मानस्वरगतिवर्ण
सारसत्वादिभिः परमलक्षणव्यञ्जनैरुपेतकान्तमूर्तिना स्वयमधिगतमहा
क्षत्रपनाम्ना नरेन्द्रकन्यास्वयंवराणेकमाल्यप्राप्तदाम्ना महाक्षत्रपेण
रुद्रदाम्ना वर्षसहस्राय गोबाह्य त्थर्धर्मकोर्तिवृद्ध्यर्थं च अपीडयित्वा ¹

¹ Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman, who has acquired great fame by study, memorising, understanding and practice of grammar, music, logic and other great sciences, who.....management of horses, elephants and chariots, use of sword and shield, pugilistic combat and other.....acts of quickness or speed and efficiency of enemy forces, who day by day is in the habit of bestowing gifts, honouring and avoiding disrespect, who is most bounteous, whose treasury with rightfully acquired tribute, tolls and shares overflows with an accumulation of gold, silver, diamonds, beryls and other precious stones, who.....prose and verse, clear, lucid, sweet, dexterous, beautiful, nobly adorned by the proper use of words, whose lovely form has the best marks and signs like proper proportions, height, voice, gait, colour, vigour and strength, who himself acquired the name Mahākṣatrapa, who has been wreathed with many garlands at the Svayamvaras of princesses (lit. king's daughters),—for.....cows and Brāhmanas for a thousand years, to increase his wealth, religious merit and glory.

सवराजलोकमडलपतिगहीतसासनस दिवसकरकरविबोधित
 कमलविमलसदिसवदनस तिसमुदतोयपीतवाहनस पळि
 पूनचदमडलससिरिकपियदसनस वरवारणविकमचारुविकमस
 भुजगपतिभोगपनिवाठविपुलदीघसुदरभुजस अभयोदकदान
 किलिननिभयंकरस अविपनमातुसुसूताकस सुविभततिवगदेस
 कालस पोरजनीनिवितेससमसुखदुखस स्वतियदपमान
 मदनस सकयवनपह्वनिसूदनस धमोपजितकरविनियोग
 करस कितापराधेपि सतुजने अपानहिंसारुचिस दिजवरकुडुब
 विवघनस खरवरातवसनिरवसेसकरस सातवाहनकुलयसपतिठापन
 करस सवमदलाभिवादितचरणस विनिवातितचातुवणसकरस अनेक ¹

From the later half of the 2nd century A.D., the Sātavāhana script in the Krishna valley undergoes a change. The letters get elongate and more ornamental, with curls and flourishes at the ends of verticals, rather over-elongated. This tendency is to be seen in the inscriptions of the fourth period at Amarāvati (See Sivaramamurti 1 pl. LXV, 8, 10.). This ornamentation of the letters is seen at its best in the inscriptions from Jaggayyapeṭa (Burgess pl. LXII, LXIII) and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (*Epigraph. Ind.* XX pl. i-v). The inscriptions from Jaggayyapeṭa and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa are of the Ikṣvāku dynasty, of which King Sirivīrapurisadata figures prominently. The letters are beautiful specimens. The vertical strokes of *a*, *ā*, *ka*, *ñā*, *ra*, *la* and the medial *i*, *ī* and *u* are quite elongate and beautifully curled. The medial *e* is also curled downwards in the typically Southern manner, as in the later inscriptions (Bühler, *Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 43). *L* peculiar to Southern script occurs in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa inscriptions (*Epigraph. Ind.* XX, p. 12). The discovery of the inscribed Āyaka pillars from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa supplies quite an amount of material for the study of the script. The passage given below (Fig. 73) is from the second Āyaka pillars to the south of the Māhācaitya at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Ibid. p. 18).

¹ Whose command was accepted by the entire circle of kings, whose face was lovely and pure like the lotus opened by the rays of the sun, whose horses had drunk the water of the three oceans, who was lovely to look at with the charm of the full lunar orb, whose gait was beautiful like that of a noble elephant, whose arms were full, rounded, broad and long like the body of the lord of serpents, whose fearless hand was wet with the water poured out in assurances of protection, who without a stop attended on his mother, who well divided the place and time for the pursuit of the triple objects, i.e., *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*, who equally rejoiced and sorrowed at the joys and sorrows of his citizens, who crushed the pride and conceit of Kṣatriyas, who destroyed the Śakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas, who utilised taxes acquired righteously, who disliked hurting life even in the case of an enemy at fault, the promoter of the families of the twice-born and the lowly, who exterminated the race of the Khakharatas, who established the glory of the family of the Sātavāhanas, whose feet were saluted by all provinces, who stopped the contamination of the four castes.....

ಸಂಚರಣಮುಖ್ಯಾಧೀನವುಳ್ಳವನು ಗುಣವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು
 ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸಂತೋಷವುಳ್ಳವನು ಸುಖವುಳ್ಳವನು

FIG. 73.

C.S. del.

सिधम् महारजस असमेधयाजिस अनेकहिरणकोटिगोततसहसहलसत
 सहसपदायिस सवधेसु अपतिहतसंकपत वासिठीपुतस इत्ताकुस
 सिरिचातमूलस दुहुता रजो सिरिविरपुरिसदतस भगिनि महासेनापतिस महा
 तलवरस महादंडनायकस धनकानं खंदविसाखंगकस भया महातलवारि
 अठविचातिसिरि अपनो उभयकुलं परिणामे[त्]न अतनोच उभयलोकहितसुखावहथनाय
 भगवतो संमसबुधस धातुवरपरिगहीतस गहाचेतिये इमं खंभं पतिठपनति
 रजो सिरिविरपुरिसदतस ६ वा प ६ दिव १०^१

Closely allied to the Jaggayyapeṭa script is that of the Prākṛt grants of the early Pallava monarchs and the writing of these charters is a development of the earlier ornamental type of the Ikṣvākus. The text of the charters in Prākṛt itself indicates their early date as also the palaeography of the letters. The writing on the charters is in a highly cursive form of the elongate letters of the Ikṣvāku inscriptions (Bühler *Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 44). The passage below (Fig. 74) is from the first plate of the Hīrahadagalli plates of Śivaskandavarman (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 2). The perfect line in Sanskrit at the end shows that the scribe was not unacquainted with the classical language, but it was more in accordance with the usage of the day that the charter should be issued in Prākṛt, as all royal edicts, grants and charters appear in Prākṛt in the early centuries before and after the Christian era. A point to be noted in the alphabet of this charter is the peculiar way in which the *anusvāra* and the serifs are indicated by a small cross, rather than by a dot or dash (*Ibid*, p. 2). There is often a confusion created by the similarity of letters like *ṭa*, *ḍa* and *da* or *ta* and *na*, or *ta* and *bha* (*Ibid*, p. 2). The form of *e* with longer vertical stroke to the right is a precursor of the same letter in later script in the Krishna valley. The medial *e* and *o* in the case of *ka* give a different form to the letter, the small horizontal stroke slightly curved at the ends running diagonally to the vertical stroke in the former (i.e. *ke*).

¹ Success! The Mahātalavari Aḍavi Catisiri, the daughter of king Vasiṭhīputa Siri Cātamūla of the Ikṣvāku family, performer of *Asvamedha* sacrifice, donor of many crores of gold coins, hundred thousand cows, hundred thousand plough lengths of land, and of unhampered determination in everything, the sister of king Siri Virapurisadata, the wife of Mahāsenāpati Mahātalavara and Mahādandānāyaka Khaṇḍaviśākharinaka of the Dhanaka family, having due regard for both her families and to secure welfare and happiness for herself in both the worlds, has erected this pillar at the Mahācaitya of the supremely enlightened Lord (Buddha) who is absorbed by the best elements (i.e., by nirvāṇa). In the sixth (regnal) year of king Siri Virapurisadata, the sixth fortnight of the rainy season, the tenth day.

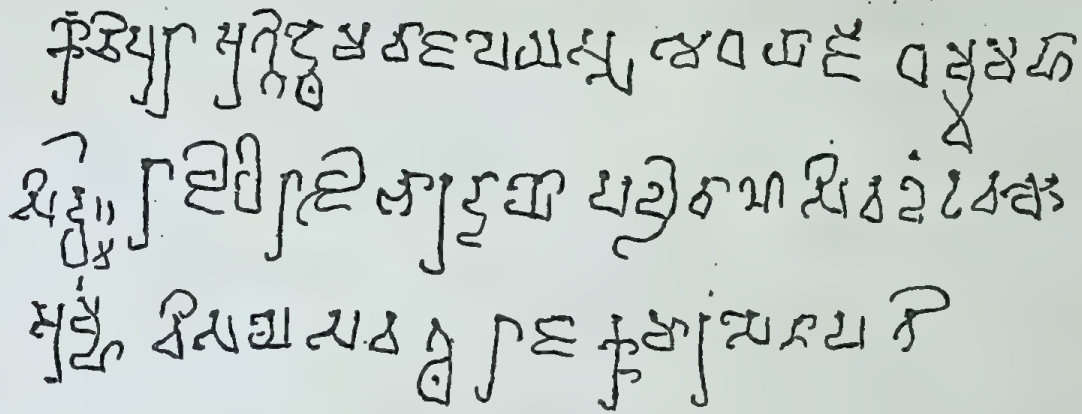


FIG. 74.

C.S. del.

कांचीपुरा अगिटयोमवाजपेयस्तमेघयाजि धम्ममहा
 सिद्धम् ॥ राजाधिराजो मारहायो पल्लवाण सिक्खंदवमो
 अम्हंविसये सवत्थराजकुमारसेनापति ¹

Somewhat earlier than the Hīrahaḍagalli plates are the Mayidavolu plates (Ibid VI, p. 84) of the same monarch (Fig. 75). Issued by Śivaskandavarman when he was yuvamahārāja or heir-apparent, it is distinctly older than the Hīrahaḍagalli plates where the epithet used is *dharmamahārājādhirāja* or righteous monarch. Though strictly the Mayidavolu plates ought to be given first they are given next to the Hīrahaḍagalli ones, as the letters of the latter, while agreeing generally with those of the former, however present some special forms not met with elsewhere in the whole range of the Indian alphabet. In the Mayidavolu and the Koṇḍamudi grants the letters have similar abnormalities and hence they should go together. The grant is in Prākṛt as is usual in the early grants. It is to be noted that the special form of *ke*, found in the Hīrahaḍagalli grant, has its origin in this grant. Among the special letters of this grant are *sa* and *ma* whether by themselves or as subscripts, as in *mmo*; *na*, *ja* and *e* (Ibid, p. 86). While *ma* and *sa* are totally different from any known letters, *na* creates a confusion by its close resemblance to *ḍa* in which form it is never known. *ja* is peculiar sometimes, but it is easily traceable to the same abnormal letter in the Bhaṭṭiprolu alphabet, as also the letter *ha*. *E* is quite different from the same letter in other inscriptions of the same date. It differs from the same letter in the Hīrahaḍagalli alphabet, though

¹ Success! From the city of Kāñci of Śivaskandavarman of the Bhāradvāja clan and Pallava family, performer of the sacrifices *Agnistoma*, *Vājapeya* and *Asvamedha*, righteous overlord of great kings.....In our territory everywhere royal princes, generals.....

its form suggests strong resemblance to the later Tamil-Grantha letters in the Pallava script of the 7th century of which it is undoubtedly the precursor.

சிவரதவம்மோ
புலவந்தரது பல்லவன்

உய்யவந்தரது பல்லவன்
புலவந்தரது பல்லவன்

FIG. 75.

C.S. del.

चीपुरातो युवमहाराजो
भारदायसगोत्तो पलवानं
सिवरदवम्भो धंजकडे
वापतं आनपयति ¹

The script of the Mayidavolu plates is also repeated in the plates of the Br̥hatphalāyana king Jayavarman (Ibid VI, p. 315) found in the village of Koṇḍamudi in the Krishna district. This grant is important for the script as well as the mention of a royal dynasty, the Br̥hatphalāyana, not known from any other records. The language is Prākṛt. The last line is another notable example of the use of Sanskrit in a Prākṛt inscription for reasons remarked above (see above p. 166). The letters peculiar to the Mayidavolu grant are found here also. *Sā, ma, ja, na* and *e* are alike in both (Ibid, p. 315). *ṣā* is however peculiar in this. But while there is a confusion between *ḍa, da* and *na* and *ṇa* in the Mayidavolu grant by the similarity of their form there is a separate sign here for *da*

¹ From the city of Kāñci Yuvamahārāja (His Royal Highness) Śivaskandavarman, of the clan of the Bhāradvājas and of the Pallava family, commands his agent at Dhaññakaṭa.

which distinguishes it from *na* which in all other respects is as confusing as *na* of the Mayidavolu grant. The passage given below (Fig. 76) is from the first two plates of the grant.

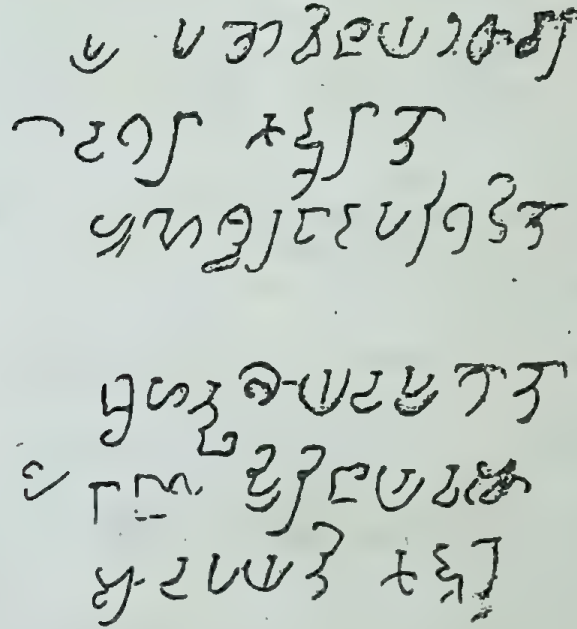


FIG. 76.

C.S. del.

विजयखधावारा

- १ नगरा कुडूरातो
महेश्वरपादपरिगहीतो
बृहत्फलायनसंगोतो
२ राजा सिरिजयवमो
अनपयति कुडूरे^१

The Western Indian script of the time is best represented in the early inscriptions of the Traikūṭakas and the Maitrakas. The plates of the Traikūṭaka king Dharasena, of the middle of the 5th century A.D., show the earlier Brāhmī type of letters not developed fully into the stage represented by those of the later Maitrakas or the earliest records of the Western Cālukyas of Bādāmi. The letters belong to the Southern variety and may be compared with the archaic ones of the Pallava records in Prākṛt of slightly earlier date. The angularities and breaks involved in the engraving of letters on copper plates are clear in this as in the early Pallava Prākṛt records. The serif of the letters is a thick short elongate dot. *Sa* is peculiar and one of its arms darts up after forming a sharp narrow angle to right. The lower end of verticals of letters, like *a*, *ā*, *ka* and *ra*, form an angle by slightly shooting up to left.

¹ From the victorious camp in the city of Kuḍūra king Śrī Jayavarma of the Bṛhatphalāyana clan and worshipper of the feet of Mahesvara commands—In Kuḍūra.

Tha is more or less like a spiral, *ya* a right-angle with vertical to right and an arc to the left end of the base line, a central slanting line ending with thick serif level with horizontal dividing the right angle. *Ma* is a triangle with the sides prolonged beyond the apex and with serifs. *La* starts to left as a query mark without dot, runs horizontally to right and up again vertically and does not curl, as in other scripts. *Va* is just a triangle with serif on top. *Ṣa* is peculiarly like *ya* of the script, except that the slanting middle line is doubled. The medial *ā*, *ε*, *o* are small slanting top strokes. The square and triangle often determine the shape of letters of the script. The script of Dahrasena (*Epigraph. Ind.* X p. 53) from which the following extract is taken (Fig. 77) is special, but the later developments in Traikūtaka inscriptions show more regular forms.

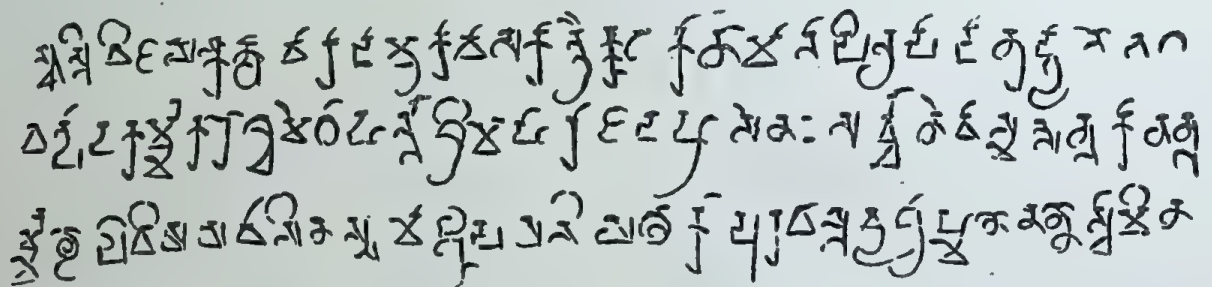


FIG. 77.

C.S. del.

स्वस्ति विजयस्कन्धावारादाम्रकावासकात्रैकूटकानां मातापितृपादानुध्यातो भग
वत्पादकर्मकरोश्वमेधाहर्ता श्रीमहाराजदहसेनः सर्वानेवास्मत्सन्तकानन्त
र्मण्डलीविषयवासिनस्समाज्ञापयति यथा कापुरवास्तव्यब्राह्मणनणस्वामिनः¹

The script of the Kuṣāṇa period in North India is the parent of the later northern type represented by the letters of the Allahabad praśasti of Samudragupta (*Fleet C. Inscr. Ind.* III p. 1). The script of the Gupta period is characterised by three varieties, the Northern, Central and the Southern. The Allahābād praśasti is in the Northern class of letters which are in direct descent from the Kuṣāṇ alphabet. The Central Indian variety of Gupta alphabet is best represented by the Eran inscription of Samudragupta (*Ibid* p. 18) and the Udayagiri cave inscription of Candragupta II (*Ibid* p. 21), the former containing letters both of the box-headed and nail-headed type and the latter a fine series of the box-headed variety so typical of all the Vākāṭaka inscriptions. The Southern variety of Gupta script, which is a clear development from the inscriptions of the Ksatrapas, is best illustrated by the Sāñchi inscription of Candragupta II and Skandagupta's Junāgaḍh inscription (*Ibid* p. 56). In addition there are other minor varieties, of which the most important is the one to be seen in the Bilsaḍ inscription of Kumāragupta (*Ibid* p. 42) where the deep thick serifs, square letters and in long straight top strokes form a striking

¹ Hail! From the victorious camp of Āmrakavāsaka Śrī Mahārāja Dahrasena of the Traikūtaka family, contemplative of the feet of his parents, performer of his duty to God, performer of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, commands all those resident in the Antarmaṇḍali area that to the Brāhmaṇa Nappusvāmi residing in Kāpura....

The Eran inscription of Samudragupta (Ibid p. 20) is a fine example of the use of box-headed and nail-headed type of letters. The letters are of the Central Indian variety with Southern characteristics. It is only a fragment and the small extract (Fig. 79) shows the nail-headed variety in the first line and the box-headed variety in the next two.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अश्वमेधं यजामासुः
 इन्द्रायैव श्रद्धां प्रज्वालामहे

FIG. 79.

C.S. del.

.. बभूव धनदान्तकतुष्टिकोपतुल्यः
 .. यस्य रिपवश्चरणोजितान्
 .. मन्तरेष्वपि विचिन्त्य परिव्रजन्ति ¹

The Bilsad pillar inscription of Kumāragupta (Ibid p. 43) is in the Northern variety of characters with beautiful letters square and triangular in shape, thick and long serifs and prolonged top strokes. The line given (Fig. 80) shows these characteristics very clearly.

गगनस्यैकतुल्यैः सृष्टांस्तर्गद्गमूत्रैर्गुह्यतेऽस्य

FIG. 80.

C.S. del.

मगवतस्त्रैलोक्यतेजसंभारसंतताद्भुतमूर्तेर्ब्रह्मण्यदेवस्य ²

The nail-headed type is best illustrated in the script of the Majhgawām plates (Ibid p. 107) of Mahārāja Hastin of 510-11 A.D. (Fig. 81). The nail-head is triangular with the apex of the triangle downwards.

अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥
 अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥
 अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥ अथानुदत्तः ॥

FIG. 81.

C.S. del.

¹ There was.....equal to Dhanada (lit. bestower of wealth) and Antaka (lit. destroyer) respectively when pleased and enraged.

Those enemies are terrified when they recollect even in their dreams.....his victories in battles.

² Lord Brahmanyadeva of wondrous form covered with the accumulated lustre of the three worlds.

नमो महादेवाय ॥ स्वस्त्येकनवत्युत्तरेब्दशते गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्तौ श्रीमति प्रवर्द्धमान
महाचैत्रसम्बत्सरे माघमासबहुलपक्षतृतीयायामस्य सम्बत्सर मासदिवसपूर्वा
यां नृपतिपरिव्राजककुलोत्पन्नेन महाराजदेवादचप्रनप्त्या महाराजश्री प्रभञ्जननप्त्या महा¹

The alphabet in the inscriptions of Toramāna and Yaśodharman shows a beautiful development from the earlier northern and Gupta variety and in them is seen the origin of the beautiful Nāgarī script. The Brāhmī letters change into a type which, being intermediate between the earlier Gupta and 7th century Nāgarī, approximates more to the latter, and it is easily seen that it is the parent of the lovely writing in the Banskhera and Madhuvan plates of Harṣavarddhana. *Ka* develops a thicker and angular lower end, which later tends slowly to shoot up to the left to meet the crossed stroke in the centre. *Ca* develops a projecting beak to the left, as also *da*. *Ya* still continues its earlier shape, and the loop to the left does not join the central stroke, nor does the latter separate itself from the lower line to form the letter, as we know it, in inscriptions of the next and subsequent centuries. *Ra* definitely thickens at the lower end. In conjunct consonants, *ra* appears sometimes above the line of the top stroke and occasionally in line with the body itself, as in conjunction with *ya*, and *rya* is just a stroke with the subscript *ya* below. *La* is tending towards its future shape. The passage chosen (Fig. 82) is from the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman (Ibid p. 146) who overcame the great Mihirakula.

सुखेन्द्रोत्पन्नसम्बत्सरे माघमासबहुलपक्षतृतीयायामस्य
सम्बत्सर मासदिवसपूर्वायां नृपतिपरिव्राजककुलोत्पन्नेन
महाराजश्री प्रभञ्जननप्त्या महाराजदेवादचप्रनप्त्या
महाराजश्री प्रभञ्जननप्त्या महाराजदेवादचप्रनप्त्या
महाराजश्री प्रभञ्जननप्त्या महाराजदेवादचप्रनप्त्या
महाराजश्री प्रभञ्जननप्त्या महाराजदेवादचप्रनप्त्या

FIG. 82.

C.S. del.

¹ Salutation to Mahādeva! Hail! After a hundred years increased by ninety-one, during the sovereignty of the Gupta kings, in the prosperous Mahācaitra year, in the third day of the dark fortnight of the month Māgha, on this day as specified by the year, month and day (Mahārāja Hastin) born of the royal family of Parivrājaka Mahārājas, great-grandson of Mahārāja Devādhyā, grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Prabhañjana.....

अलौहित्योपकण्ठात्तलवनगहनोपत्यकादामहेन्द्रादागङ्गाश्लिष्टसानोस्तुहिन
 शिखरिणःपश्चिमादापयोधेः सामन्तैर्यस्य बाहुद्रविणहतमदैः पादयो
 रानमद्विश्वडारताङ्गशुराजिव्यतिकरशबला भूमिभागाः क्रियन्ते ॥ स्थाणोरन्यात्र
 येन प्र
 णतिकृपणतां प्रापेत् नोत्तमाङ्गं यस्याश्लिष्टो भुजाभ्यां वहति हिमगिरिर्दुर्ग
 शब्दाभिमानं नीचैस्तेनापि यस्य प्रणतिभुजबलावर्जनाक्लिष्टमूर्ध्ना चूडापुष्पो
 पहारैर्मिहिरकुलनृपेणार्चितं पादयुग्मं ॥ (गा)मेवोन्मातुमूर्ध्वं विगणयितुमिव ¹

The development of the Nāgarī script in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. is interesting. It is at this stage that the letters are most decorative. The script of the Lakkhāmaṇḍal praśasti (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 10) and the Bodh-Gayā inscription of Mahānāman (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 274) present certain features which suggest affinities to the earlier script. The script in Harṣavarddhana's copper plate grants, though however of the same period, is a little different from the usual variety of the time, the flourishes being very pronounced for the superscripts. It resembles the script of the Jhālrapāṭan inscription (*Ind. Ant.* V, p. 180), the Banaras inscription of Pantha (*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 60), and the Deogarh rock inscription of Svāmibhaṭa (*Ibid* XVIII, p. 125). The letters are very ornamental and are the most artistic in Indian calligraphy. The beauty of the letters composing the body of the inscription is surpassed only by the sign manual of the emperor in letters so beautifully and ornamentally incised that Bühler remarks, if King Harsa really used these characters in signing all legal documents, he must have been a most accomplished penman, and the cares of government and the conquest of India must have left him a great deal of leisure (*Ibid* IV, p. 209). Harṣavarddhana was an eminent poet and litterateur, an able administrator, conqueror and a devotee of his faith. King Bhoja of Dhārā is an instance of a royal polymath. Penmanship in such cases was quite a simple affair. The florid lines of these letters have real companions in the South Indian Pallava Nāgarī inscriptions of similar beauty in Mahābalipuram and in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram. The letters have pronounced wedges, generally to the right top of the vertical, which slants to right. A tail

¹ From the neighbourhood of the river Lauhityā to the Mahendra mountain dense with palm-groves, from the snow-peaked Himālaya mountain with its slopes embraced by Gangā to the Western Ocean, feudatories, with their pride humbled by the might of his arm, render the ground variegated by the interplay of the rays of their crest-jewels as they bow at his feet. Whose pair of feet is adorned with offerings of flowers from the crest by even that king Mihirakula, with the head experiencing pain in the act of the low salute that brought down his might of arm, Mihirakula whose head had never been subjected to the humility of obeisance except to Sthānu (Śiva), and by the embrace of whose arms the snow mountain bears the epithet Durga, i.e., well fortified and hence inaccessible. As if to measure heaven above or to count.....

is developed at the right end, which forms a short angle. This variety has been termed the acute-angled script, and the term *kuṭila* has been discarded, though really the letters are *kuṭila*, i.e., crooked, but beautifully so. The curved cross-stroke of the letter *ka* does not yet join the lower tip of the vertical to the left as in later letters. Occasionally *na* with its loop to left, attached to the top instead of to the vertical, appears like *ga* and causes confusion. The subscript *ya* is definitely curved and not like as it appears in the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman. The superscripts *ā*, *i*, *ī*, *e*, *ai*, *o* and *au* also run in flourishes like streamers, and are not feather-shaped, as in the Mandasor inscription and resemble those in the Jhālrapāṭan praśasti. The *upadhmāṇīya* is a semi-circle open above and with curled ends. The superscribed wedge-shaped 'r' never rises above the top line, obviously to leave it free for the medial signs *ā*, *ī*, etc. The passage selected (Fig. 83) is from the Banskhera plates of Harṣavarddhana (Ibid IV, p. 208). The inscription is couched in elegant Sanskrit prose.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

FIG. 83.

C.S. del.

ओ स्वस्ति महानौहस्त्यश्वजयस्कन्धावाराच्छीवर्धमानकोटया महाराजश्रीनर-
वर्द्धनस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यात

श्रीवज्रिणीदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराजश्रीराज्यवर्द्धनस्तस्य
पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातश्रीमद

प्सरोदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराजश्रीमदादित्यवर्द्धनस्तस्य
पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातश्रीम

हासेनगुप्तादेव्यामुत्पन्नश्चतुस्तमुद्रातिक्रान्तकीर्तिः प्रतापानुरागोपनतान्यराजो
वर्णाश्रम

व्यवस्थापनप्रवृत्तचक्र एकचक्ररथ इवप्रजानामर्त्तिहरः परमादित्यभक्तः परमभट्टारक

महाराजाधिराजश्री प्रभाकरवर्द्धनस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातस्सितयशः प्रतानविच्छुरित

सकलभुवनमण्डलः परिगृहीतधनदवरुणेन्द्रप्रभृतिलोकपालतेजास्तत्पथोर्पिजिता

नेकद्रविणभूमिप्रदानसंप्रीणितार्थहृदयोतिशयितपूर्वराजचरितो देव्याममल

यशोमत्या श्रीयशोमत्यामुत्पन्नः परमसौगतस्सुगत इव परहितैकरतः परमभट्टारक¹

The early development of Nāgarī in Eastern India is best illustrated by the script of the plates of Śaśāṅka (Ibid VI, p. 143). They are of the same time as those of Harṣavarddhana. The script though of the acute angled nail-headed type, like that of the plates of Harṣa-

¹ Om ! Hail ! From Vardhamānakoti the victorious camp consisting of the great navy and elephant forces and cavalry—(There was) Mahārāja Śrī Naravarddhana ; his son that contemplated on his feet was Mahārāja Śrī Rājyavardhana, born of Queen Vajriṇidevī and a great devotee of the Sun god ; his son that contemplated on his feet was Ādityavardhana, born of Queen Apsarodevī and a great devotee of the Sun god ; his son that contemplated on his feet was Paramabhaṭṭāraka (the great Lord) Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Prabhākaravarddhana, born of Queen Mahāsenaguptadevī and a great devotee of the Sun god, whose fame crossed the four oceans, who subdued the other princes by his power and benevolence, whose wheel (of power) moved to well establish *varṇa* and *dharma*, who removed the misery of his subjects like the rider of the chariot with a single wheel, i.e., Sun god ; his son that contemplated on his feet was Paramabhaṭṭāraka (Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Rājyavardhana), born of the Queen Yaśomati of spotless fame and a great follower of Buddha being himself like Buddha completely given to doing good to others, who covered the entire globe with the canopy of his white fame, who assumed the lustre of Kubera, Varuṇa, Indra and other Lokapālas (lords of the quarters) who satisfied the minds of supplicants by many gifts of money and land acquired by righteous means, and who outshone in character all previous monarchs.

yarddhana, has yet certain peculiarities that mark it out from the other. The curved cross stroke of *ka* joins the vertical from the left wherever it occurs independently and not in a conjunct consonant. The left limb of *sa* is open and not joined, as in the Banskhera plate. *Da, na, śa, pa, ma* and many other letters differ. The tail to the right end is not pronounced in this script. Superscript *ra* is above the top line and the medial strokes are simpler. Subscript *ya* is of the earlier type. The *upadhmānīya* is an oval, divided by a central stroke. The script is also illustrative of the Nāgarī of the time in the Kalinga country. The passage chosen (Fig. 84) is from the first plate of the inscription.

ॐ स्वस्ति - चतुर्दशसालिलवीचिमेखलानिलीनायां सद्दीपा
गरपत्तनवत्या वसुन्धराया गौसावदे वर्षशतत्रये वर्तमाने
महाराजाधिराजशीशशाङ्कराज्ये शासति गगनतल
विनिर्मुक्त भगीरथावतारिताया हिमवद्भिरेरपरि
पतनानेकशिलासंहातविभिन्नवहिष्पातालात्तज्जलैश्चै
सुरसरित इव विविधतरुवरकुसुमसञ्छन्नेभ्यतट¹

FIG. 84.

C.S. del.

ओ स्वस्ति - चतुर्दशसालिलवीचिमेखलानिलीनायां सद्दीपा
गरपत्तनवत्या वसुन्धराया गौसावदे वर्षशतत्रये वर्तमाने
महाराजाधिराजशीशशाङ्कराज्ये शासति गगनतल
विनिर्मुक्त भगीरथावतारिताया हिमवद्भिरेरपरि
पतनानेकशिलासंहातविभिन्नवहिष्पातालात्तज्जलैश्चै
सुरसरित इव विविधतरुवरकुसुमसञ्छन्नेभ्यतट¹

Further development of the Nāgarī script in the Gangetic region is to be seen in the charters of the Pratihāra kings of the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. The letters approach the still later types and shed their affinities to the earlier Brāhmī, which can be seen clearly in the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions and even in the Nāgarī of the 7th century A.D. *Ā* develops a full vertical stroke to right, instead of the small lower stroke to the right. The curved cross stroke of *ka* joins the vertical to the left. The left limb of *kha* slants twice and forms a shape that continues in all later types. The body of *ja* beneath the serif curves

¹ Om! Hail! On this (gem-laden) earth, resting on the girdle of waves of the water of the four oceans and having islands, mountains and towns, during the year 300 of the Gupta era, when Māhārājādhirāja Saśāṅka was ruling (from the bank of the Salimar river), with both its banks covered with a variety of flowers of excellent trees, like the celestial river (Gaṅgā) that issued from heaven being brought down by Bhagīratha, its water streams falling on the top of the mountain Himālaya being divided into many streams by dashing and breaking against many rocks.....

twice like 'S', and the top end is continued slanting down to right. A small tail is added to *da* at its lower end to right. A loop is formed to the left of *ma* which continues in all later forms of the letter. A blade-like strip is added over half way from the bottom to left to the curved vertical of *ra*. The left limb of *śa* separates and curves at the top, and the central stroke is absent. The left limb of *ṣa* is a little more open than in the earlier type. The tail to the bottom of letters is more pronounced in this script, and the serif is a horizontal stroke and not a wedge. The letters are compressed. The superscripts *ā*, *i*, *ī*, *o*, etc., are simpler. The sign for *e* specially is so simple that it is almost missed. The passage chosen (Fig. 85) is from the grant of the Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla of Mahodaya (*Ind. Ant.* XV., p. 105).

ॐ स्वस्ति श्रीमहोदयसमावासितानेकनौ . . . स्तयश्चरथपत्तिसम्पन्नस्कन्धावारात्परम वैष्णव
महाराजश्रीदेवशक्तिदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानु . . . तः श्रीदुयिकादेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमामा-
महाराजश्रीवत्सराजदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादा, . . . सुन्दरीदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परम्भगवती . . .
क्तो महाराजश्रीनागभट्टदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्रीमदीसठादेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्य
मक्तो महाराजश्रीरामभट्टदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्रीमदप्पदेव्यामुत्प
न्नः परम्भगवतीमक्तो महाराजश्रीभोजदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्री चन्द्रम
हारिकादेव्यामुत्पन्नः परम्भगवतीमक्तो महाराजश्री महेन्द्रपालदेवः ॥ श्रावस्ती¹

FIG. 85.

C.S. del.

¹ Om! Hail! From the camp teeming with many ships, elephants, horses, chariots and infantry stationed there—(there was) the great devotee of Viṣṇu, Mahārāja Śrī King Śaktideva; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of the queen Śrī Duyikādevī was the great devotee of Maheśvara King Vatsarājadeva; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of queen Śrī Sundaridevī was the great devotee of Bhagavati (Devi) King Nāgabhaṭṭa; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of the queen Śrīmad Isatādevī was the great devotee of the Sun god Mahārāja Śrī King Rāmabhadradeva; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of the queen Śrīmad Appadevī was the great devotee of Bhagavati, Mahārāja-Śrī King Bhojadeva; his son that contemplated on his feet born of the queen Śrī Candrabhaṭṭārikādevī was the great devotee of Bhagavati Mahārāja-Śrī King Mahendrapāla—Śrāvastī.....

Still further development of this variety of Nāgarī is seen in the inscriptions of the Gāhaḍavālas of Kānyakubja. In this script the letters have become definitely more modern-looking. The horizontal stroke covers the entire top of the letter. The letter is compressed or attenuated and straight. The vowel *i* is different from the earlier one. The left limb of *kha* has a small triangular terminal loop. *Gha* is no more composed of three strokes, but the central line dwindles, giving a shape like that of the letter in other Nāgarī varieties of slightly earlier, contemporary and later dates. *Na* is composed of three vertical strokes with the top horizontal, as in all later forms of the letter. The middle horizontal limb, with terminal loop and with terminal triangle, distinguishes *na* and *bha* respectively, as in all later varieties. The tail of *ha* to left is lengthened. The medial signs *ā*, *e*, *o* are usually represented by vertical stroke to right, left and on both sides respectively of the letter. Sometimes *o* is represented by the superscript *e* and vertical stroke to right and *au* by the side strokes and superscript. The signs for *i*, and *ī* are gracefully curved at the top end. The present selection (Fig. 86) is from the copper plate of Candrādityadeva (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIV., p. 197), dedicating a village to the shrine of Śrī Candramādhava at Candravati and is couched in fine language describing the ephemeral nature of fortune and power and the necessity of righteous conduct.

अमुर्वेदिदितेवतावेदिमन्त्रितः कृतियमदि वयावला कश्मलीया मनुमय कुमुमसंय
दिवसंयमन्ततगतवर्षादि कटकदिनीपुलिनवालुका कृतमिवदिनामापराया तमपुशः कट्ट कयाकि
ला दुर्जरकिलरता विषयता गाः मद्यदा ता कन यममन्त्र निवेद्या विलसितानी वदुयवासा
गीष्टिमाणि नन्दमन्त्रि रयिम कस्तमन्त्रा विरवादिनीष्टिः प्रामाणि कीर्तिः कृतिर्निर्मित्यवधंसा
मदति कयानेकादमसंवयरे वेसावनिता कस्तः नतीयमन्त्रिनिदिनि प्रयाकृततौ या युगादियवर्षा
नमित्तमन्त्रि रणायमध्यामी दादि कन वयावला विविवन्त्रादवमुनिमनुज तत यिचमणां
मन्त्रायि ता निमिचय रतया टनयडमहसमुद्रा विषययकाय किति जलदहनयवनगामनयकमान
शहिनि किरिता उण व पुषमाव विपति शकतमे रवमन्त्रायी मग्नो वायुद वया मज्जा विताय प्रचुव
याय मन्त्र विद्या हविर्गुह्यै यिचपिण्डयज्ञं निर्वर्त्य उपरिलिखितगामाभ्य कृतस्तुतिगिरिगहनगैर्त्रैव व

FIG. 86.

C.S. del.

अस्तु वो विदितैव तावदियमनित्यता जगतः कतिपयदिवसावलोकमणीया मधुमासकुसुमसंप
दिव संपत् । सततगत्वरं गिरिकटकवाहिनीपुलिनवालुकाकूटमिव देहिनामायुरापातमधुराः

कडुकपाकि

नो दुर्जरास्तिलखला इव विषयभोगाः सदसदालोकनपराङ्मुखानि वेश्याविलसितानीव दुरु-

पचारा

णीन्द्रियाणि । तदिदमस्माभिरपि सकलसास्त्राविसंवादिनीभिः प्रामाणिकीभिः स्मृतिभिर्विमृश्य

षट्पंचा

शदधिकसतैकदेससंवत्सरे वैसाखासिताक्षतःतृतीयायां सनिदिने अद्याक्षततृतीयायुगादिपर्वणि
जानितसुरसरिद्धरणाघमर्षणे श्रीमदादिकेशवघट्टे स्नात्वा विधिवन्मन्त्रदेवमुनिमनुजभूतपितृगणां
स्तर्पयित्वा तिमिरपटलपाटनपट्टमहसमुष्णरोचिषमुपस्थाय क्षितिजलदहनपवनगगनयजमान
तुहिनकिरणारुणवपुषमोषधिपतिशकलसेखरं समभ्यर्च्य भगवतो वासुदेवस्य पूजां विधायप्रचुर
पायसेन हविषा हविर्भुजं हुत्वा पितृपिण्डयज्ञं निर्वर्त्य उपरिलिखितग्रामाः साजलस्थलगिरि-
गहनगर्तोपर¹

The development of the Nāgarī script in the 11th century in Western India can be seen in the script of the grants of the Paramāra kings of the time. The Banswara plates of Bhoja of Dhārā (Ibid XI, p. 181) show letters that still retain wedges but considerably flattened and well on the way to a horizontal serif line. This top line, unlike earlier letters, covers the entire top. The letters however change and assume a different shape in later Paramāra inscriptions where the script resembles somewhat the ornamental variety of Candella given in the tables. Here sometimes *ka* in *ku*, *kr*, etc., has a terminal loop to left for its cross stroke. The left limb of *kha* is a curved elongate triangle, as also that of *ga*. *ṣa* is composed of an S-shaped left limb and an undulating vertical right limb, joined at the top by a flattened wedge serif. *Na* is composed of three verticals, the central one short and issuing from

¹ It is known to you, this ephemeral nature of the world ; that prosperity is like the wreath of flowers in spring pleasant to behold only for a few days ; that the life of beings is ever impermanent like dunes of sand particles of a stream on mountain slope ; that sexual enjoyments are sweet on the surface but bitter in the end and not easily assimilated like bad sesamum seeds ; that the sensory organs are not easily satisfied being opposed to scrutinising of right and wrong like the charms of a courtesan ; hence having consulted the *Smṛtis* that are authoritative and in consonance with all *Śāstras*, on this Saturday the *aksata* third day of the dark fortnight of the month of Vaisākha in the year eleven hundred increased by fifty-six on the *Akṣāta* tṛtīya of the Yugādi-parvan, having bathed in the *Ādikeśava* ghaṭṭa at the sin-destroying confluence of the celestial river Gaṅgā and Varuṇā, and having satisfied according to rights gods, sages, men, animals and manes, having adored the hot-rayed sun who possesses effulgence effective in dispelling the gathering of darkness, having worshipped Śiva whose body is composed of earth, water, fire, wind, sky, sacrificier, cool-rayed moon and the sun and whose crest adornment is a slice of the lord of medicinal herbs (the moon), having performed worship of lord Vāsudeva, having made offerings of excellent milk food and ghee to the enjoyer of sacrificial ghee (fire) and having finished the rites of food-offering: o the manes, we (hereby make over) the above-mentioned village with its areas of water and soil, mountain and forest, pits and marshes.....

the upturned apex of the flattened wedge serif. *Pha* has a double curved stroke added to right, which forms a loop towards the top and slants down. *Ra* has a triangular central projection added to the vertical to left. The limbs of *Śa* are separated at the top and the left one curves in to the top and has a curved triangle at its lower end. The medial *ā*, *e*, etc., are as in the script of the Gāhadavālas. The passage chosen (Fig. 87) is from the charter of Bhoja whose eminence as a polymath, poet, grammarian, rhetorician, architect, yogācārya, engineer, administrator, general and patron of letters is very well known.

ॐ जयति व्योमकेशोसौ यः सर्गाय विभक्तिं तां ऐन्दवीं शिरसा लेखां ज
गद्बीजांकुराकृतिं ॥ तन्वंन्तु वः स्मरारातेः कल्याणमनिश जटाः ॥ क
ल्पांतमयोद्दामतटिहल्यपिंगलाः परमभट्टारकमहारा
जाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसीयकदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभट्टारकम
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीवाकपतिराजदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभ
ट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसिन्धुराजदेवपादानुध्यात
परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर श्रीभोजदेवः कुशली ॥

FIG. 87.

C.S. del.

ओं जयति व्योमकेशोसौ यः सर्गाय विभक्तिं तां । ऐन्दवीं शिरसा लेखां ज
गद्बीजांकुराकृतिं ॥ तन्वंन्तु वः स्मरारातेः कल्याणमनिश जटाः ॥ क
ल्पांतमयोद्दामतटिहल्यपिंगलाः परमभट्टारकमहारा
जाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसीयकदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभट्टारकम
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीवाकपतिराजदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभ
ट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसिन्धुराजदेवपादानुध्यात
परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर श्रीभोजदेवः कुशली ॥ ¹

Towards the end of the 11th century A.D. the script of North-eastern India develops certain characteristics that distinguish it as the parent of the modern Bengali. These characteristics are clearly seen in the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena (Ibid I, p. 305) of about the close of the 11th century and beginning of the 12th century A.D. The letters, though of the Northern type, differ in some respects pronouncedly, as in vowels *i* and *e* and consonants *kha*, *ja*, *ña*, *la*, *ṇa*, *ta*, *tha*, *pha*, *bha*, *ma*, *ra*, *la* and *sa*. In Vaidyadeva's grant

¹ Om ! Victorious is (Śiva) the one whose hair floats up skywards, who for the purpose of creation bears on his head that streak of the moon that is like the sprout of the seed of the universe. May those matted locks of the enemy of Smara (Cupid), brown like the bright curves of lightning towards the end of an aeon, always do you good. All well ! The great lord paramount king of kings Śrī Bhojadeva, who contemplates on the feet of the great lord, paramount king of kings Śrī king of kings Sindhurājadeva, who contemplates on the feet of the great lord, paramount king of kings Śrī Śiyakadeva..... Vākapatideva, who contemplates on the feet of the great lord, paramount king of kings Śrī Śiyakadeva.....

(Ibid II, p. 347) of slightly later date the change towards the Bengali script is clearer still. *Ra*, usually a superscript, is sometimes used in the line itself. *Avagraha*, the first appearance of which has been traced in the Baroda copper plate of Rāstrakūṭa Dhruva (see Bühler p. 91), is clearly used in this inscription. Bühler, on account of the definite shape of these letters towards Bengali, has named the script proto-Bengali, as the parent of the later script. The language of this inscription is undoubtedly beautiful. It has been composed by the famous poet Umāpatidhara, of whose poetic skill Jayadeva, his younger contemporary, has given his estimate along with that of Dhoyī, the author of Pavanadūta वाचः पल्लवयत्युमापतिधरः धोयी कविस्मापतिः ॥ i.e., Umāpatidhara allows his words to sprout, Dhoyī is king among poets. As may be seen from the following short passage (Fig. 88), the letters have an individuality all their own and the language is sweet but verbose, as described by Jayadeva.

उच्चित्राणि दिगम्बरस्य वसनान्यर्धाङ्गनास्वामिनो रत्नालंकारातिमूर्ध्वशोषितवपुःशोभाः शतं सुभ्रुवः
पौराद्याश्च पुरीः श्माशानवसतेर्भिक्षाभुजोस्याक्षयां लक्ष्मी स व्यतनोदरिद्रभरणे सुज्ञो हि
चित्रक्षौमेभचर्म्मा हृदयविनिहितस्थूलहारो रोगेन्द्रः श्रीखण्डक्षोदमस्मा करमिलितमहानील-
वेषस्तेनास्य तेने गुरुडमणिरुतागोनसः कान्तमुक्तानेपथ्यत्रस्थिरिच्छासमुचितरचनः कल्पका-
बाहोः केलिभिरद्वितीयकनकच्छत्रं धरित्रीतलं कुर्वाणेन न पर्यशेषि किमपि स्वेनेव तेने
हितिम् ॥ किन्तु
सै दिशतु प्रसन्नवरदोप्यर्धेन्दुमौलिः परं स्वं सायुज्यमसावपश्चिमदशाशेषे पुनर्दास्यति ॥¹

FIG. 88.

C.S. del

उच्चित्राणि दिगम्बरस्य वसनान्यर्धाङ्गनास्वामिनो रत्नालंकारातिमूर्ध्वशोषितवपुःशोभाः शतं सुभ्रुवः
पौराद्याश्च पुरीः श्माशानवसतेर्भिक्षाभुजोस्याक्षयां लक्ष्मी स व्यतनोदरिद्रभरणे सुज्ञो हि
सेनान्वयः ॥
चित्रक्षौमेभचर्म्मा हृदयविनिहितस्थूलहारो रोगेन्द्रः श्रीखण्डक्षोदमस्मा करमिलितमहानील-
रत्नाक्षमालः-
वेषस्तेनास्य तेने गुरुडमणिरुतागोनसः कान्तमुक्तानेपथ्यत्रस्थिरिच्छासमुचितरचनः कल्पका-
पालिकस्य ॥
बाहोः केलिभिरद्वितीयकनकच्छत्रं धरित्रीतलं कुर्वाणेन न पर्यशेषि किमपि स्वेनेव तेने
हितम् ॥ किन्तु
सै दिशतु प्रसन्नवरदोप्यर्धेन्दुमौलिः परं स्वं सायुज्यमसावपश्चिमदशाशेषे पुनर्दास्यति ॥¹

¹ He gave highly decorated clothes to the naked one (lit. quarter-clothed); to the lord who assumed the form of which a half was woman (lit. lord of half a woman), a hundred damsels with charming brows all with the beauty of their

ओं स्वस्ति श्रीमतामखिलभुवनविनुतनयविनयदयादानदाक्षि
 ण्य सत्यशौचशौर्य वैर्यादिगुणरत्नपावित्रकाणामात्रे
 यगोत्राणां विमलविचराचारपुण्यशालिप्रक्षालित क
 लिकालकल्मषमपीणां महामहेन्द्राचलशेखर प्र
 तिष्ठितस्य सचराचरगुरोः सकलभुवनिनिम्मा
 णैकसूत्रधारस्य शशाङ्कचूडामणे भ्रमगवतो गोकर्णस्वामिनः प्र
 सादात्समासादितैकशङ्खभेरीपञ्चमहाशब्दधवलच्छत्र
 हेमचामरवरवृषभलाञ्छनसमुज्ज्वल समस्तसाम्राज्यम ¹

The Pallavas usually used Grantha and Tamil for their inscriptions and there are floriated and plain varieties of this. A few of the Pallava inscriptions are found also in Nagari, and a whole series of *birudas* are incised in this script in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram. These *birudas* are in a script closely resembling the Nagari of Śrī Harṣavardhana. There are two varieties, the florid and the plain. The present inscription (Fig. 90) is from Śāluvaṅkuppam (Ibid X, p. 12) and is one of the early inscriptions in Nāgarī found in South India. The floriated variety shows beautiful flourishes and curls and peacock designs worked into the letters, specially the medials and subscripts which makes it rank with the most lovely floriated Canarese letters in the shape of swans, peacocks and other birds (see above p. 34).

provided a dress to him that would be in accordance with the wish of the wearer of skulls, at the time of the deluge. Making the whole expanse of earth devoid of a second golden umbrella by the (heroic) sports of his arm, he was left nothing that he can desire for. So what possibly can the half moon-crested one (Śiva) grant him even though pleased to confer a boon? But (this we pray) He will grant him final union with Himself at the end of his old age.

¹ Om! Hail? (of the family of the Gaṅgas) who are fortunate, pure by excellent qualities praiseworthy of the whole world like kindness, liberality, courtesy, truthfulness, cleanliness, heroism, bravery, etc., who belong to the Ātreya clan, who are cleansed of the soot of the sinful dirt of the Kali age by the holy water of pure thought and deed, whose entire royal glory is effulgent with the unique conch, drum, five musical instruments, white umbrella, golden chauri and precious bull emblem all obtained by the grace of the Lord Gokaṁasvāmi, the lord of all mobile and immobile things, the one architect for the creation of this entire universe, and the wearer of the moon as crest jewel.....

ज्योत्स्नापूर इवामलशशधरादाहादयन्मेदिनी यः प्रावर्तत यद्गतेन शशिनं मुक्त्वा कलङ्कः
 कचित्
 यस्यास्तोदयहिम्यशैलमलयाः सैन्येभदन्तावलीटङ्कक्षुण्णतटा भवन्ति विजय
 स्तम्भा जगन्निर्जये ॥ असीद्यस्यविलोलवीचिकालिकावाहाग्रफेनावलीप्रेङ्गुच्चा
 मरचारुचरचतुरा दासी चतुस्सागरी यज्जातस्य करोति मूर्ध्नि मुकुटीवन्यैकवन्धो रमालीलाम्भा
 रुहमण्डलेन ललितां रत्नातपत्रश्रियम् ॥ यज्जातेष्वनुबन्धयाजिषु गतेष्वद्यापि तारापथे
 लक्ष्यन्ते
 हयमेधधूमनिकरा लग्ना इवाम्भोधराः यत्रत्यानिव चानुकर्तुमथ ते गत्वा चतुस्सागरी-
 म्वर्धन्त्याहतमाहत
 म्वसुमतीभूयै त्वसासेचयम् ॥ स्थेया क्षितिभृतां मूर्ध्नि स्फुरन्मुक्ताफलोदयः वंशो वाष्णैय
 भूपानां सोयमा¹



FIG. 92.

The use of Nāgarī in South India has not been much. The Pallava inscriptions are the earliest to use it. Nāgarī was used for the legends on coins in the early Coḷa issues of Uttama

¹May that family of the kings descended from Vṛiṣṇi, shining like (a string of) pearls, remain above the heads of kings ; the family that like the pure flood of moon-light issued from the moon gladdening the world ; on account of which the stain on the moon has disappeared ; and for the conquest of the world by which the mountains of *Asta* (sunset) and *Udaya* (sunrise) Himalaya and Malaya serve as pillars of victory with their slopes battered by the chisel-like rows of tusks of elephants in the army for which the four oceans became a hand-maid (as it were) adept in waving beautiful chauris in the form of the line of foam in the hand-like crests of their moving wave, for those (kings) born in which the goddess *Ramā* (Lakshmi) produces the charm of a beautiful jewelled umbrella with her sportive lotus over their heads always associated with the crown ; though those incessant performers of sacrifices born in which are no more, yet even now ought to be seen the volumes of smoke from their horse sacrifices as if sticking to the sky in the form of clouds ; and as if to emulate those belonging to this family, they (i.e., the clouds) fetch from the four oceans over and over again and shower the best of their essence for the welfare of the world.

Cola, Rājarāja (Fig. 92) and Rājendra Gaṅgaikondān. Similarly Nāgarī was used for the coin legends in Ceylon, e.g., Parākramabāhu, Vijayabāhu, Līlāvati, Sāhasamalla, Dharmāśoka, Bhuvanaikabāhu, all of which are similar to the coinage of the great Coḷa emperor Rājarāja (Smith p. 327). Nāgarī was used on coins from Kerala also, and the coin with the legend *Virakeraḷasya* on obverse and *Gaṇḍaraṅkuṣasya* on reverse of about the 13th century A.D. is an example. There is a rare instance of use of Nāgarī on a copper plate from the border of the Cera and Paṇḍya country, but in Coḷa territory the script used for inscriptions is only Grantha Tamil or Vaṭṭeluttu. In the area of the Pāṇḍyas Nāgarī has been used for the legends of some coin types, which Elliot considers the earlier series (Elliot p. 119 and pl. III, 129). In the Ceylon type of Pāṇḍya coins, Nāgarī is not used and the legend is in Tamil. So either this Nāgarī should be before the 11th century or after the 12th century, but, considering the letters, the latter seems more probable and probably the use of Nāgarī in Ceylon and Coḷa area influenced the adoption of Nāgarī in Pāṇḍya territories also. The type of letters used and the central lines separating the rows of letters, as in the case of Hoysala coins with Canarese legends, like *Talakāḍu-konḍa* or of the late Vijayanagara coins with Nāgarī legends, warrant this assumption. From the Vijayanagara period onwards Nāgarī is used profusely for all copper plates, the signature alone being in Canarese Telugu. It is also used for coin legends. The type used here is known as Nandināgarī, and is a debased variety of the earlier Yādava and Kākatiya Nāgarī.

The earliest instances of the use of Nāgarī either in Western India or the Deccan are in the Samangad plates of Dantidurga and the Paṭṭadakal pillar inscription of Kīrttivarman II (*Epigraph. Ind.* III, p. 1) from which latter the present extract (Fig. 93) is taken. Fleet opines that these characters stand midway between the characters of the Bodh-Gayā inscriptions of Mahānāman and the Samangad copper plates, as the former shows a further stage of development. The letters here have a triangular top with apex downwards, wherever the letters admit of it, as in the case of *ka, kha, ca, ja, ta, da, na, pa, ba, bha, ma, ya, ra, la, ṣa, sa, ha*. The letters *pa, ma, ṣa, sa* and *ya* have a top line, not yet fully developed. Nāgarī is about this time already in vogue in the Pallava area further to the South-East, as there are inscriptions of the close of the 7th century in places like Śāḷuvaṅkuppam and Kāñcīpuram. In the Deccan and Western India Nāgarī was later freely used by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, who succeeded the Western Cāḷukyas of Bādāmi. The inscription, from which the following extract is taken, belongs to the last of the Western Cāḷukyas of Bādāmi. This and Pallava Nāgarī thus represent the Nāgarī type occurring for the first time in Deccan and South India and in vogue in the 7th-8th centuries A.D. Further details about the extent of use, development, etc., of Nāgarī in South India already discussed may be seen above (p. 187).

ॐ नमः शिवाय ॥ स जयतु वामबाहुपरिचुम्बितवदनप
 योद्धरोस्थलो अलिकुललोललीलअलकावालिवि
 द्दृत्कराग्रमण्डलो दशशतनयनकिरणपरिवर्द्धितरागर
 सातिवर्द्धितो विकसितपुण्डरीकप्रातिमो हरगौरीतगमो स
 जयतु चुलुकिवंशवर्द्धमान रघुरिवकलियुग . . सृष्टमनमूर्यसु(त)
 मिव दानरतः सदा वृकोदरमिव साहसरसिक श्रीनिरवद्यबुद्धारवि(ज)
 यादित्यसत्याश्रय श्रीपृथिवीवल्लभ . . हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरमहाराकेन ¹

FIG. 93.

C.S. del.

ओं नमः शिवाय ॥ स जयतु वामबाहुपरिचुम्बितवदनप

योद्धरोस्थलो अलिकुललोललीलअलकावालिवि

द्दृत्कराग्रमण्डलो दशशतनयनकिरणपरिवर्द्धितरागर

सातिवर्द्धितो विकसितपुण्डरीकप्रातिमो हरगौरीतगमो स

जयतु चुलुकिवंशवर्द्धमान रघुरिवकलियुग . . सृष्टमनमूर्यसु(त)

मिव दानरतः सदा वृकोदरमिव साहसरसिक श्रीनिरवद्यबुद्धारवि(ज)

यादित्यसत्याश्रय श्रीपृथिवीवल्लभ . . हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरमहाराकेन ¹

Further development of Nāgarī in the Deccan is illustrated in the Talegāon plates of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Kṛṣṇarāja I (Ibid XIII, p. 275) wherein the letters show an approach towards the type of Nāgarī used in later Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions. This change in form may be seen in the letters composing the inscriptions of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III. The Bagumrā plates of Indrarāja III of 915 A.D. (Ibid IX, p. 24) may be quoted as examples. The present

¹ Om Salutation to Śiva. May that union of Hara and Gaurī be victorious, union in which the face and breasts are caressed (lit. kissed) by the left arm the fingers move out among the curly tresses resembling (in their movement) a swarm of bees in motion and which resembles a full blown white lotus with its beauty enhanced by the flush of the red which is made obvious by the rays of the thousand-eyed sun god. May he be victorious the promotor of the *Culuki* family like Raghu with mind uncontaminated by Kali (sin), delighting in charity like the son of Sūrya (Kārṇa), ever fond of adventure like Bhīma (lit. with attenuated belly like that of a wolf), the illustrious, unimpeachable, noble Vijayāditya Satyāśraya, the beloved of Fortune and of Earth, Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara Bhaṭṭāraka.....

selection is from the second of these grants (Fig. 94). The full top stroke of *a*, *ā*, with sign of elongation of the earlier type from the centre of the vertical to right, the peculiar open triangle for the left limb of *kha*, *ga*, and *śa* are noteworthy. *Gha*, *ḍa* and *ṣa* with central stroke are of the earlier type. *Na* and *na* are nearer the later varieties. *Ṣa* has a stroke across, instead of aslant. *Ra* is more or less like the Eastern Gāṅga letter of the 11th century A.D.

कृत्वास्पदं हृदयहारि जघन्यदेशे स्वैरं पुनर्मृदु विमर्द्य च मध्यदेशं
यस्यासमस्य समरे वसुधाङ्गनायाः काञ्चीपदे पदमकारि करेण भूयः ॥ अतेतोः सा
नुवप्रप्रवलकपिकुलोन्ननफुल्लवङ्गादा कैलासाद्भवानीचलचरणरणनूपुरो
न्नादितान्तात् । यस्याज्ञां भूमिपालाः करमुकुलमिलनैलिमालायमानामानम्रैरु
त्तमाङ्गैरवनितलुठज्जानवो मानयन्ति ॥ जित्वा जगन्निजभुजेन पुनर्जिगीषोः स्वर्गं
विनेतुमिव तस्य गतस्य राज्ञः ॥ तत्राभवत्परमघात्रि पदे पितृव्यः श्रीकृष्णराजनृप
तिः प्रथितप्रतापः ॥ दिक्कुन्दरीवदनचन्दनपत्रमंगलीलायमानधनविस्तृतकान्तकी ¹

FIG. 94.

C.S. del.

कृत्वास्पदं हृदयहारि जघन्यदेशे स्वैरं पुनर्मृदु विमर्द्य च मध्यदेशं
यस्यासमस्य समरे वसुधाङ्गनायाः काञ्चीपदे पदमकारि करेण भूयः ॥ अतेतोः सा
नुवप्रप्रवलकपिकुलोन्ननफुल्लवङ्गादा कैलासाद्भवानीचलचरणरणनूपुरो
न्नादितान्तात् । यस्याज्ञां भूमिपालाः करमुकुलमिलनैलिमालायमानामानम्रैरु
त्तमाङ्गैरवनितलुठज्जानवो मानयन्ति ॥ जित्वा जगन्निजभुजेन पुनर्जिगीषोः स्वर्गं
विनेतुमिव तस्य गतस्य राज्ञः ॥ तत्राभवत्परमघात्रि पदे पितृव्यः श्रीकृष्णराजनृप
तिः प्रथितप्रतापः ॥ दिक्कुन्दरीवदनचन्दनपत्रमंगलीलायमानधनविस्तृतकान्तकी ¹

Though many inscriptions of the later Cālukyas are in the Canarese script, unlike those of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, most of which are in Nāgarī, there are yet some in Nāgarī, as the earlier

¹ The hand of this (prince) without a peer in battle, having established itself on the alluring lower region of the earth-damsel, and after freely and softly pressing the central region, set itself on the region of Kāñcī (lit., the region of the city Kāñcī and the region of the girdle, i.e., below the waist), even as a lover's hand after establishing itself on the hip of a damsel that lures the heart, and freely and softly pressing the waist again sets itself on the region of the girdle or beneath the waist. From the *Setu* with blossoming cloves pulled by herds of mighty monkeys on the mountain slopes, to the mountain Kailāsa with its ends resounding with the jingle of the anklets on the moving feet of Bhavānī, kings honour with their heads his command appearing like a crest garland touched by their hands in adoration as their knees rubbed the ground. When by the might of his arm he won the earth and desirous of further victory went to heaven as if to conquer it, in his illustrious seat sat his uncle king Śrī Kṛṣṇarāja of renowned valour. Of (that king whose) fame was full, expansive and bright, sporting itself in the designs in sandal paste painted on the faces of the damsels namely the quarters.....

tradition of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas persisted and later specially the Yādavas and to a certain extent the Kākatiyas continue to use the script. The script of the later Western Cālukyas of Kalyāṇ is more or less a settled type, approximating to the modern Devanāgarī. The Nīlgunda plates of Vikramāditya VI (Ibid XII, p. 142) are an example of this script of the 12th century A.D., but the most neatly executed, but somewhat defaced, inscription of the time and reign is the Sītābaldī inscription (Ibid III, p. 304) from which the present extract is taken (Fig. 95).

ॐ स्वस्ति शक्रनृपकालातीतसंवत्सरांतर्गतदशशतयत्र अष्टत्यधिकसकु १००८ प्रभवसं
वत्सरे वैशाखसुधतृतीयायुक्दिने अद्य ह समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीपृथ्वीवल्लभ
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरपरमभट्टारकसत्याश्रयकुलतिलकचालुक्याभरणश्री
मतिभुवनमल्लदेवमहीप्रवर्द्धमानकरयाणविजयराज्ये । तत्पादपद्मोपजीवीलत

FIG. 95.

C.S. del.

ॐ स्वस्ति शक्रनृपकालातीतसंवत्सरांतर्गतदशशतयत्र अष्टत्यधिकसकु १००८ प्रभवसं
वत्सरे वैशाखसुधतृतीयायुक्दिने अद्य ह समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीपृथ्वीवल्लभ
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरपरमभट्टारकसत्याश्रयकुलतिलकचालुक्याभरणश्री
मतिभुवनमल्लदेवमहीप्रवर्द्धमानकरयाणविजयराज्ये । तत्पादपद्मोपजीवीलत ¹

The next stage of development of Nāgarī in the Deccan is marked by the script used by the Yādava kings of Devagiri. The script used here closely resembles the rude variety of the late Cālukyan Nāgarī used in the Nīlgunda plates which is a contrast to the neat and beautiful letters of those in the Sītābaldī inscription. These rudely incised letters are the parent of the still more clumsy letters of the Vijayanagara grants. The letter *i* is well on its way to the modern type, as seen in Vijayanagara script. *Na* and *tha* of both this and the contemporary Kākatiya script approach the late Vijayanagara form. *Dha* is peculiarly like *śa* without the top stroke. *Ba* for the first time has a stroke aslant on its belly, and this is continued in Vijayanagara script. The left limb of *śa* of the earlier type is slightly lower and

¹ Hail ! In the year of ten hundred with eight added to it after the time of the Śaka king, in Śaka 1008, on Friday the 3rd lunar day of the bright fortnight of Vaiśākha of the year Prabhava ; during the prosperous, auspicious and victorious reign of Mahārājādhirāja, Paramśvara, Paramabhāṭāraka Tribhuvanamalladeva, the refugee of the entire world, the beloved of Fortune and of Earth, the beauty mark of the family of Satyāśraya, the ornament of the Cālukyas ; the dependent on his lotus feet.....

a small stroke connects it with the top line. The passage chosen for illustration (Fig. 96) is from the Thāṇa plates of the Yādava king Rāmacandra of the 13th century A.D. (Ibid XIII, p. 198).

पादयासतरातिरेकविनमत्पृथ्वीमिधुःसंमिलत्सप्त
लोधिपयःप्रवाहकलनावित्रस्तविश्वत्रयाः । चंचत्कौतुककंदुकीकृतकुल
क्षोणीघरश्रेणयो हेरम्बस्य जयंति दानरभसभ्रांतालयः केलयः ॥ १ विभ्राण
स्तुहिनाद्रिमौलिविलसलीलाभ्रलीलां भुवं दंष्ट्रायेन जगत्त्रयीमवतु स क्रीडावरा
हो हरिः । यस्यांगन्यतिषंगिणी प्रसृमरा सा कापि सप्तार्णवी नव्योन्निद्रतमश्रमांबुक
णिकासंदेहमभ्यस्यति ॥ २ आस्ते पयोधिप्रतिमो यदुनां वंशः प्रतीतो भुवनत्रयेपि ।¹

FIG. 96.

C.S. del.

पादन्यासभरातिरेकविनमत्पृथ्वीमिधुःसंमिलत्सप्त
लोधिपयःप्रवाहकलनावित्रस्तविश्वत्रयाः । चंचत्कौतुककंदुकीकृतकुल
क्षोणीघरश्रेणयो हेरम्बस्य जयंति दानरभसभ्रांतालयः केलयः ॥ १ विभ्राण
स्तुहिनाद्रिमौलिविलसलीलाभ्रलीलां भुवं दंष्ट्रायेन जगत्त्रयीमवतु स क्रीडावरा
हो हरिः । यस्यांगन्यतिषंगिणी प्रसृमरा सा कापि सप्तार्णवी नव्योन्निद्रतमश्रमांबुक
णिकासंदेहमभ्यस्यति ॥ २ आस्ते पयोधिप्रतिमो यदुनां वंशः प्रतीतो भुवनत्रयेपि ।¹

The use of Nāgarī script continued during the Vijayanagara rule in South India and the Deccan, and its peak was from the 15th century onwards. Canarese and Tamil Grantha was also used but Nāgarī was the dominating script at least for the copper plate grants. The signature was usually in Canarese, either in the king's name as *Śrī Harihara*, etc., or in the name of the deity *Śrī Virūpākṣa*, *Śrī Triambaka*, etc. The Nāgarī used is known as Nandināgarī and is a clumsy derivative of the earlier Yādava and Kākatīya scripts. The illegible nature of the script and clumsy formation of the letters is, as Burnell thinks, probably due to the slow deterioration owing to the practice of writing on palm leaves (Burnell p. 53). Rounded letters, like Telugu, Canarese, etc., lent themselves for beautiful writing on palm leaves while the angularities of Nāgarī led to deterioration. The peculiarities to be noted in the script are that *bha* and *ta* are almost alike, *tha* and *dha* are like modern Nāgarī *dha* and *tha* respectively. The triangular formation to right top of *kha* characterises it. *ja* is peculiarly like modern Nāgarī *ū*. *Na* has no terminal loop for its horizontal middle limb. *Ba* has a stroke against its belly. *Ra* is composed of a top and middle stroke against the vertical

¹ The sports of Heramba are victorious, sports wherein the three worlds are terrified by the sinking of the earth by the heavy tread of his feet, and consequent mingling of the streams of the seven oceans and where the rows of the principal mountains are made moving sportive walls. May that Hari in the sportive form of a boar protect the three worlds (Hari) who held the earth on the tip of his tusks even as she looked like a dark cloud on the peak of the snow-clad (Himālaya) mountain, by the contact of whose body the entire seven oceans mixed up and flowed giving the illusion of drops of perspiration caused by the fatigue of one awake after deep slumber. There is the family of the Yadus famous in the three worlds and comparable to the ocean.

one. *Sa* is simpler than the earlier letter. The passage chosen (Fig. 97) is from the Satya-maṅgalam plates of Devarāya II, illustrative of the script of the 15th century A.D. and resembles the Daṇḍepalle plates of Vijayabhūpati (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIV, p. 68).

भूयस्यै भवतां भूयै मूयादाश्चर्यकुंजरः ।
विहारविपिनं यस्य विदुर्वेदान् पुराविदः ॥ क्षे
मं वः प्रचुरीकुर्यात् क्षोणीमभ्युद्धहन्नयं क्रोडा
कृतेरभूद्यस्य क्रीडापल्लवमंबुधिः । अस्ति क्षी
रणवोद्भूतमपां पुष्पमनुत्तमं । अम्लानं यद
निर्मल्यमापत्ते शिरसीश्वरः । सदामोदनिधेस्त
स्य संतानो यदुसंज्ञया । अभूदाश्चर्यमाधुर्यं वसु
धायास्तपः फलं । संगमो नाम राजासीत्सारभू
तं तदन्वये । प्रजानां यः समस्तानां प्रमोदो भूति
मानिव सर्वरत्ननिधेस्तस्य संम्राडासीत्तनूभुवां
मध्ये बुक्कमहीपालो मणीनामिव कौस्तुभः ॥

FIG. 97.

C.S. del.

भूयस्यै भवतां भूयै मूयादाश्चर्यकुंजरः ।
विहारविपिनं यस्य विदुर्वेदान् पुराविदः ॥ क्षे
मं वः प्रचुरीकुर्यात् क्षोणीमभ्युद्धहन्नयं क्रोडा
कृतेरभूद्यस्य क्रीडापल्लवमंबुधिः । अस्ति क्षी
रणवोद्भूतमपां पुष्पमनुत्तमं । अम्लानं यद
निर्मल्यमापत्ते शिरसीश्वरः । सदामोदनिधेस्त
स्य संतानो यदुसंज्ञया । अभूदाश्चर्यमाधुर्यं वसु
धायास्तपः फलं । संगमो नाम राजासीत्सारभू
तं तदन्वये । प्रजानां यः समस्तानां प्रमोदो भूति
मानिव सर्वरत्ननिधेस्तस्य संम्राडासीत्तनूभुवां
मध्ये बुक्कमहीपालो मणीनामिव कौस्तुभः ॥ ¹

SAW. GANESAN
KARAIKUDI. S. I. R.

¹ May that wonderful elephant (Gaṇapati), whose pleasure grove seems have understood to be the Vedas, give you all immense prosperity. May this (God) increase your welfare, for whom in his boar form as he raised up the earth the ocean became the sportive pit. There is the most precious, unfading flower never cast off, and born of the milky ocean, which Śiva wears on his head. Of that repository of perennial joy (or sweet perfume) was born an offspring named Yādu, the wonderfully sweet fruit of the penance of the earth. In his distinguished family was born a king named Saṃgana who was like the joy incarnate of all his subjects. Of that repository of all gems, among all his sons was the emperor Bukka, like the *Kaustubha* among gems.

The development of the script in Central India may be seen in the evolution of the box-headed letters which show southern characteristics. A very early inscription with letters of the box-headed variety is the Eran stone inscription of Samudragupta. In this inscription both the box-headed and nail-headed varieties occur as already pointed out (see above p. 172). The Udayagiri cave inscription of Candragupta is another early one in this script. But it is the Vākātaka inscriptions that are the most important of the box-headed variety. The Nachne-ki-talāi inscription of Mahārāja Prthvīśeṇa (Fleet *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 233) is a very early one among the Vākātaka inscriptions. The letters are not shapely, as Vākātaka characters usually are, but the box-head is quite clear. The later charters of the Vākātaka family are well shaped and are typical specimens of this variety. The letters are quite angular and, though not attenuated, are more heightwise than breadthwise. But in the further development of this script, to be seen in the plates of the Kings of Somavamśa, the letters are more elongate heightwise and the crossing lines usually slightly extend beyond their limit, giving special peculiarity to them, which distinguishes them from the normal earlier variety. The box-head is found in the case of almost all the letters, including sometimes even in the letter *ja* that does not lend itself to it, but some letters like *e*, *ba*, *la*, etc., lack it. *Ja* has this box-head sporadically. It has it in the Siwanī plates of Pravarasena II (Fleet, *Ibid.* p. 243) but not in the Dudiya plates of the same monarch. *I* has a small central vertical stroke. *Kha* has a regular oblong base as in other box-headed varieties. *Ba* has a square indentation in the middle of its outline to left. The medial signs are simple and like those of the contemporary early Pallava series, except that *u* and *ū* are more angular. The passage chosen (Fig. 98) is from the Dudiya plates of the Pravarasena II (*Epigraph. Ind.* III, p. 258).

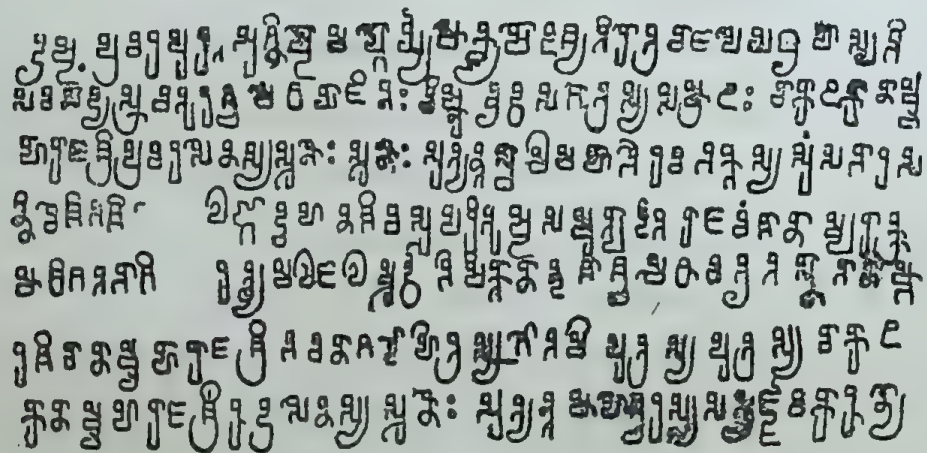


FIG. 98.

C.S. del.

दृष्टम् प्रवरपुरत् अग्निष्टोममोर्ग्यामोवध्यषोडस्यतिरात्रवाजपेयबृहस्पति
 सवसाद्यस्कचतुरश्वमेधयाजिनः विष्णुवृद्धसगोत्रस्य सम्राटः वाकाटकानाम्म
 हाराजश्रीप्रवरसेनस्यसूनोः सूनोः अत्यन्तस्वामिमहाभैरवभक्तस्य असभारत
 त्रिवेशितशि[व]लिङ्गोद्ग्रहनशिवसुपरितुष्टसमुत्पादितराजवंशानाम्पराक्क
 माधिगतभागीरथ्यमलजलमूर्द्धाभिषेक्तानान्दशाश्वमेधावभृतस्नातानाम्मा
 रशिवानाम्महाराजश्रीभवनागदौहित्रस्य गौतमीपुत्रस्य पुत्रस्य वाकाठ
 कानाम्महाराजश्रीरुद्रसेनस्य सूनो अत्यन्तमाहेश्वस्य सत्यर्जवकारुण्य ¹

The Kadambas along with the Vākāṭakas had not only political but marital relationship with the Guptas and Gupta influences naturally can be observed. An important affinity is noticed in the box-headed script used in the early Kadamba inscriptions. The most perfect example of this variety is in the Tālagunda inscription of Kākusthavarman. The letters are long, narrow and artistic. The spread of the box-headed variety in the South, through the Vākāṭaka area, is observed in the Kadamba, Early Western Gaṅga, Śāṅkāyana and early Pallava inscriptions of about the 4th-5th centuries A.D. The Tālagunda inscription supplies the most regular and artistic writing among early Kadamba inscriptions and this is greatly due to its being engraved on stone, unlike those of Mṛgeśavarman on metal plate (*Ind. Ant.* VII, p. 37 and *Epigraph. Carn.* IV, p. 136). Among vowels *i*, *u* and *e* are noteworthy, the first lacking the central stroke occurring in the Vākāṭaka letter. The letters *kha* and *ja* lack a rectangular base and the box-head respectively, as in the Vākāṭaka script. Noteworthy letters are *ḍa* and *ḍha*, *ta* and *tha*, the latter with the circlet in the centre, *ba* with the small inward indentation to the left and *la* with its long and beautifully curved tail end. The subscript *na* and *ya* may be noted. Medial *ā*, as it occurs in two ways in the case of *ṇa*, i.e., in continuation of the letter or as an additional mark, is noteworthy. The medial marks

¹ It has been seen From Pravarapura—the son's son of Mahārāja Śrī Pravarasena of the Vākāṭaka family, an emperor, of the Viṣṇuvṛddha clan, and performer of sacrifices like *Agniṣṭoma*, *Aptoryyāma*, *Ukthya*, *Soḍaśī*, *Atirātra*, *Vājapeya*, *Brhaspatisava* and *Sadyaskra* and four *Aśvamedha* sacrifices, the daughter's son of Māhārāja Śrī Bhavanāga, exceedingly devoted to the Lord Mahābhairava and of the Bhāraśiva family, whose royal house originated owing to the supreme pleasure of Śiva at the act of their carrying the *Śivalinga* placed on their shoulder, who were bathed on their head (during coronation) by the pure water of the (river) Bhāgīrathī (Ganges) won by their valour and who had taken the *avabhrta* bath after performing ten *Aśvamedha* sacrifices, son of Gautamīputra (Rudrasena) son of Māhārāja Śrī Rudrasena of the Vākāṭaka family (son of Pṛthvisena), who was exceedingly devoted to Śiva, was truthful, straight, merciful.....

for *i*, *ī*, *ū* and *r* are ornamental and *u* rather unobtrusive. Final *m* is denoted by a miniature *ma* slightly below the line. The passage chosen (Fig. 99) is from the Tālagunda inscription of Kākusthavarma discovered by B. L. Rice in 1894 (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 24). It is in fine Sanskrit verse and mostly in a peculiar metre not so far described in any treatise on prosody. The poet is Kubja, one of the noteworthy contributors to Sanskrit literature preserved in inscriptions.

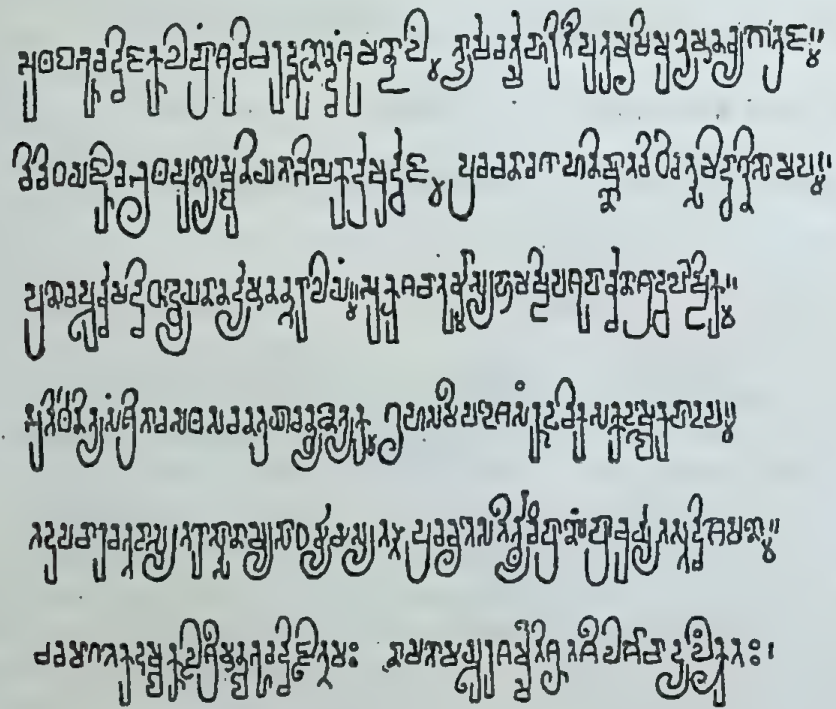


FIG. 99.

C.S. de .

अथ बभूव द्विनकुलप्रांशुविचरद्रुणेन्द्रं शुमण्डलम् व्यापवर्त्महरितीपुत्रमृषिमुख्यमानव्यगोत्रजम् ॥

विविधयज्ञावभृथपुण्याम्बुनियताभिषेकाद्र्मुर्द्धजम् प्रवचनावगाहनिष्णातविविधवत्समिद्धामिसोम-
पम् ॥

प्रणवपूर्वषड्विधाधेयनानर्धमानन्तरालयम् ॥ अकृशचातुर्मास्यहोमोष्टिपशुपावर्णश्राद्धपौष्टि-
कम् ॥

अतिथिनित्यसांश्रितावसथसवनत्रयावन्ध्यनैत्यकम् गृहसमीपदेशसंरूढविकसत्कदम्बैकपादपम् ॥

तदुपचारवत्तदास्य तरोस्तानाम्यसाधर्म्यमस्यतत् प्रववृते सतीर्ष्यविप्राणां प्राचुर्यतस्तद्विशेषणम्॥

एवमागते कदम्बकुले श्रीमान्वभूव द्विजोत्तमः नामतो मयूरशर्मेति श्रुतशीलशौचाद्यलंकृतः ।¹

In the Kalinga and neighbouring areas the script used about this time was of the box-headed type. A beautiful inscription of the Nalas, a dynasty of rulers of this area, shows letters approaching in beauty those of the Tālagunda inscription. This inscription at Podāgaḍh in the Jeypore agency of Visakhapatnam district (Fig. 100) is the only inscription on stone of the Nalas yet discovered (Ibid XXI, p. 153). The letters are more rounded than in the Tālagunda inscription where they are distinctly compressed, narrow and heightwise. There is no box-head for *ja* as sometimes in the Vākāṭaka letter, and *ba* has no inward indentation to the left, as in the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba letter. Final *m* is represented by a miniature *ma* below the line. The marks of medial vowels and some ligatures are drawn with flourishes which however are not so sweeping as in the Tālagunda inscription.

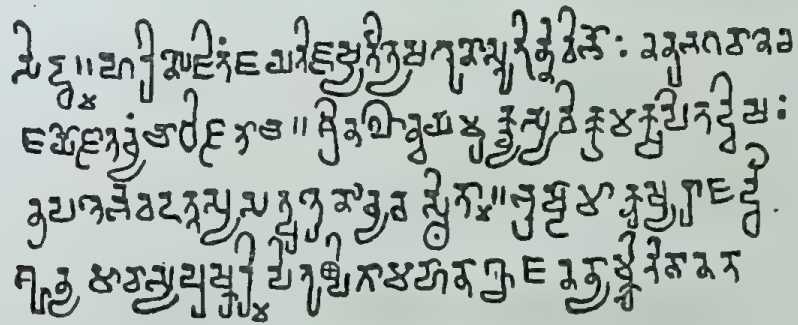


FIG. 100.

C.S. del.

सिद्धम् ॥ हरिणा जित जयति जेष्यतीत्येष गुणस्तुतिर्न विभोः ननु भगवानेव

जयो जेतव्यं चाधिजेताच ॥ श्रीनलान्वयमुकख्यस्य विक्रमक्षपितद्विषः

¹ Then arose a high family of the twice-born with its circle of good qualities expanding like the rays of the moon, in which the sons of Haritī trod the path of the three Vedas, and which was born of the foremost of ṛsis Mānavya; in which the hair was wet with the bath of holy water of final ceremonies of different sacrifices, which was well versed in delving deep into the sacred lore, lit the (sacrificial) fire according to proper rites and drank *soma* (juice); the interior of whose houses was resounding with the study chant of the six subjects of study (*Vedāṅgas*) all beginning with *Om*; that performed without any simplification *Cāturmāsya* sacrifice, burnt offerings, oblations, animal sacrifices and fortnightly *śrāddha*; with the daily ceremonies always fruitful by three sacrifices in the house always resorted to by guests, and having a single blooming Kadamba tree growing in the vicinity of the house. By the tending of this tree for these Brāhmaṇa co-students there arose generally that distinguishing epithet which was the nature of sameness of name with the tree; when thus flourished the Kadamba family there arose an illustrious Brāhmaṇa named Mayūra-sarman who was adorned with virtues like scholarship, conduct and purity.

नृपतेर्मवदत्तस्य सत्पुत्रेणाव्यवस्थिताम् ॥ भ्रष्टामाकृश्य राजर्द्धि

शून्यमावास्य पुष्करीम् पितुःपितामहानाञ्च जनन्याम्कृत्तिनानता ¹

The use of box-headed script for the Kalinga inscriptions may be noticed in some, if not all, wherein the unmixed Southern type of letters is used. The Rāgolū plates of Śaktivarman (Ibid XII, p. 1.) and the Brhadprōṣṭha plate of Umāvarman (Ibid, p. 4) present the best examples. The box is filled and is not marked in outline, as in the regular box-head letters of the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba inscriptions. The letters are buxom, and not narrow and artistic, like the ones in the Tālagunda inscription. The following passage is from the Rāgolū plates : (Fig. 101).

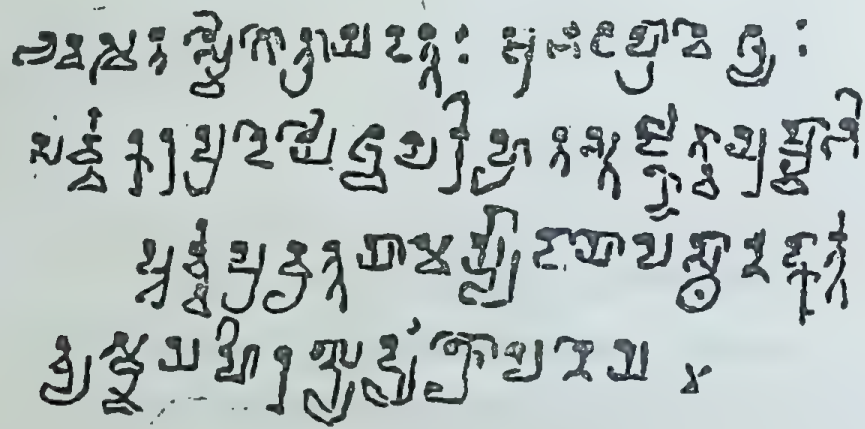


FIG. 101.

C.S. del.

एवमेतस्मै गोत्राय दत्तः अभटप्रावेश्यः

सर्वकरप्रदेयैश्च परिहृतस्त ज्ञात्वा युष्माभि

पूर्वप्रवृत्तया मर्यादयोपस्थानकृत्

व्यम्मेयहिरण्याद्यक्षोपनेयम् ²

Another early Eastern Ganga inscription, dated in the 39th year of the Ganga era, is chosen for letters showing the box-headed type. The box-head is not very prominent, as in the Vākāṭaka or Kadamba inscriptions, though it is sufficiently obvious. The letters

¹ Success ! There can be no praise of the qualities of the all pervasive Lord in the strain ' Hari has been victorious or is victorious or will be victorious ' ; rather it is the Lord Himself Who is victory, the object of victory and the victorious. By the illustrious son of King Bhavadatta the foremost of the Nala family and the valiant destroyer of enemies was recaptured the uncertain and lost royal glory and re-peopled the deserted city Puṣkari of his fathers and forefathers and to his mother.

² To him belonging to this Gotra is it (the land) given ; it may not be entered by the king's servants and is exempt from all taxes and dues ; knowing this you should abide by the obligations already prevailing and bring measurable things, gold, etc.

are more buxom and not narrow like those of the Tālagunda inscription and the media vowels are not expressed with flourishes. The following passage (Fig. 102) is from the Jirjingi plates of Ganga Indravarman (Ibid XV, p. 281).

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 दन्तपुरं नमस्कृत्य श्रीमदहन्तपुराद्भगवत्सकलमु
 वनतलोत्पत्तिस्थितिप्रलयहेतोः परमेश्वरस्य सततप्रणा
 मावाप्तः पुण्यसञ्चयप्रभावानिरस्ताशेषदुरितो गाङ्गामलकुल
 गगनतलसहस्ररश्मिः अनेकचातुर्दन्तसमरविजय
 विमलबिकोचनिस्त्रिङ्गधारासमाक्रान्तसकलतामन्त
 नृपतिमण्डलाधिपतिः मकुटनिहितरुचिरपथराग
 प्रभाप्रसेकपरिष्वङ्गपिङ्गाङ्गीकृतचरणयुगलः¹

FIG. 102.

C.S. del.

ॐ स्वस्ति अमरपुरप्रतिस्पर्द्धिश्रीमदहन्तपुराद्भगवत्सकलमु
 वनतलोत्पत्तिस्थितिप्रलयहेतोः परमेश्वरस्य सततप्रणा
 मावाप्तः पुण्यसञ्चयप्रभावानिरस्ताशेषदुरितो गाङ्गामलकुल
 गगनतलसहस्ररश्मिः अनेकचातुर्दन्तसमरविजय
 विमलबिकोचनिस्त्रिङ्गधारासमाक्रान्तसकलतामन्त
 नृपतिमण्डलाधिपतिः मकुटनिहितरुचिरपथराग
 प्रभाप्रसेकपरिष्वङ्गपिङ्गाङ्गीकृतचरणयुगलः¹

The box-head loses its prominence in the Ganga plates of a slightly later date, though it can still be distinguished. The Acyutapuram plates of Indravarman (Fig. 103), dated in the 87th year of the Ganga era, (Ibid III, p. 127) and later than the previous one by half a century are examples. The letters are definitely squat and dumpy. The loop for *na* is separated from and joined to the vertical line, as in Nāgarī. Medial *ī* is indicated by an upturned crescent or circlet in a large loop above the letter. *Ba* as usual lacks the usual indentation to left.

¹ Om! Hail! From Dantapura that emulates the city of the gods, who is rid of all sins by the efficacy of merit earned by constant obeisance to Lord Paramēśvara, the cause of the creation, existence and destruction of the entire world, the thousand-rayed sun in the expanse of the firmament of the spotless family of the Gangas, the overlord of hosts of all vassal kings overpowered by the edge of the spotless unsheathed sword victorious in many battles with numerous four-tusked elephants, whose pair of feet was reddened by the embrace through the scattering of the red lustre of the lovely gems set in the crowns of (vassals).

ॐ स्वस्ति सर्वतुर्मणीयाद्विजयकलिङ्गनगरात्सकलभुवननिर्माणैक
 सूत्रधारस्य भगवतो गोकर्णस्वामिनश्चरणकमल्युगलप्रणामा
 दपगतकलिकुङ्को विनयनयसम्पदामाधारः स्वासिधारापरि
 स्पन्दाधिगतसकलकलिङ्गाधिंराज्यश्चतुरुदधितरङ्गमेखलावनिन
 लप्रविततामलयशाः अनेकसमरसंक्षोभजनितजयशब्दो
 गाङ्गामलकुलप्रतिष्ठः प्रतापातिशयानामितसमस्तसामन्त¹

FIG. 103.

C.S. del.

ॐ स्वस्ति सर्वतुर्मणीयाद्विजयकलिङ्गनगरात्सकलभुवननिर्माणैक
 सूत्रधारस्य भगवतो गोकर्णस्वामिनश्चरणकमल्युगलप्रणामा
 दपगतकलिकुङ्को विनयनयसम्पदामाधारः स्वासिधारापरि
 स्पन्दाधिगतसकलकलिङ्गाधिंराज्यश्चतुरुदधितरङ्गमेखलावनिन
 लप्रविततामलयशाः अनेकसमरसंक्षोभजनितजयशब्दो
 गाङ्गामलकुलप्रतिष्ठः प्रतापातिशयानामितसमस्तसामन्त¹

The box-headed type of script occurs in the early Pallava charters of about the 5th century A.D. The Māngalūr (*Ind. Ant.* V, p. 154), Uruvapalli (*ibid* p. 51) and Pikira (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 159) grants are examples. The letters of the Pikira and Māngalūr grants are not so well-shaped, as in the Uruvapalli grant, in which the box-head is clearly depicted, as in the Vilavaṭṭi grant. The box-head in the case of these grants is a little smaller than in those of the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba inscriptions, but is nevertheless clear. This represents the box-head as it occurs in the Tamil area, and the script has its echoes in Java in the inscription of Pūrṇavarman, the script of which closely resembles that in Pallava grants. Among vowels, *e* and *u* are to be noted. The medial vowels are drawn with ornamental flourishes which to an extent approach the grace of those in the Tālagunda inscription as *i*, *ī*, *u*, the last occurring in two forms in the usual mode and downward curve, as in *gu* and *bhu*. *ū*, *e* and *r* are also similarly drawn. In all these cases the signs are similar in these allied inscriptions. *O* is specially peculiar in the case of *lo*. Among consonants *ja* does not have a box-head as sometimes in Vākāṭaka script. *Ta* has a loop which *na* lacks. Among subscripts *ya* and *ra* are drawn with flourishes. The final *m*, as in *Pallavānām*, is expressed

¹ Om ! Hail ! From the victorious Kalinganagara, pleasant in all seasons—who is free from the blemishes of the Kali age by obeisance to the lotus-like pair of feet of Lord Gokarṇasvāmi, the supreme architect for the creation of the entire world, who is the receptacle of the wealth of modesty and wisdom, who gained overlordship of the entire Kalinga by the movement of the edge of his sword, whose spotless fame covered the surface of the earth girdled by the waves of the four oceans, who has caused the shouts of victory in the turmoil of many battles, famous of the pure Gāṅga family, who has subdued all his feudatories by his great might.....

by a smaller letter below the line, as in the Tālagunda inscription. The example chosen here is from the Pīkira grant of Simhavarman (Fig. 104).

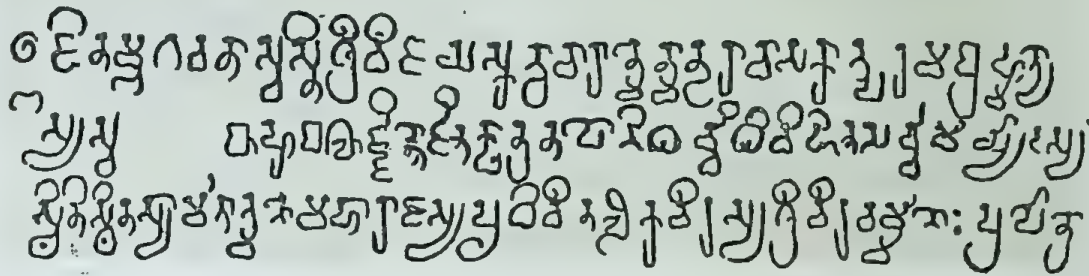


FIG. 104.

C.S. del.

◎ जितम्भगवता स्वस्तिश्री विजयस्कन्धावारान्मेन्मानूरावासकात्परमब्रह्मण्य

१ स्य स्वबाहुबलार्जितोर्जितक्षेत्रतपोनिधर्विधिबिहितसर्वमय्यादस्य

स्थितिस्थितस्यामितात्मनो महाराजस्य पृथिवीतलैकवीरस्य श्रीवीरवर्मणः प्रपौत्रो ¹

The best example of box-headed script in the Pallava area is to be seen in the Vilavaṭṭi plates (Fig. 105), in which the letters are even more beautifully shaped than in the Uruvapalli plates. The box-head is clearly marked, though the size is smaller than in the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba letters. Some of the letters in this grant are nail-headed or arrow-headed, and the occurrence of the box-head together with the nail-head reminds us of the Eran Gupta inscription. The noteworthy point about the letters is that, in the case of *śa* and *ṣa*, the small curl to the right inside, as in the other inscription, is here a neat small square. *Ba* has sometimes an inward indentation to the left, which is not invariable. The box-head for *ga* and *śa* is absent. *Na* and *ta* are distinguished by the absence and presence of the loop. *ṣa* also lacks a box-head which sometimes occurs in the Vākāṭaka letter. Final *m* and *t* are expressed by miniature letters below the line. In this particular inscription the peculiar Tamil letter *la* occurs. Medial *ī* is expressed by curling one end of the loop. *Kha* has a rectangular bottom. The following passage is from the Vilavaṭṭi plates of Simhavarman (Ibid XXIV, p. 296).

¹. Om ! The Lord (Viṣṇu) has been victorious ! Hail ! Prosperity ! From the victorious camp of Menmān-ūr, the great grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Viravarman, the most virtuous repository of penance and great warriorhood won by the might of his arm, who established all rules of conduct according to the precept of the *Sāstras*, who was abiding by the law and immeasurably great.....

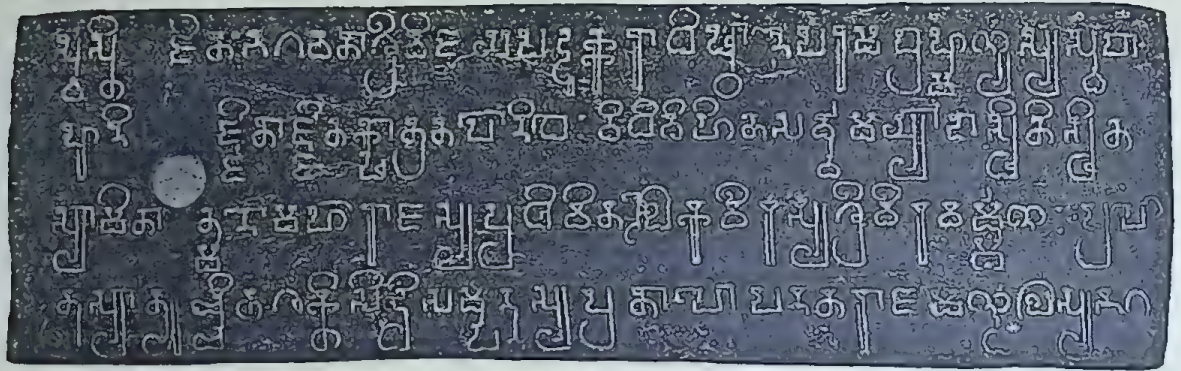


FIG. 105.

स्वस्ति जितं भगवता श्रीविजयपट्टकराधिष्ठाने परमब्रह्मण्यस्य स्वहां
 हुनिर्जिताब्जितक्षात्रतपोनिधेः विधिविहितसर्वमर्यादास्थितिस्थित
 स्यामितात्मनो महाराजस्य पृथिवितलैकवीरस्य श्रीवीरवर्मणः प्रपौ
 त्रस्यात्युच्चितशक्तिसिद्धिसम्पन्नस्य प्रतापोपनतराजमण्डलस्य भग¹

Closely akin to the letters of the Uruvapalli grant and the Tālagunda inscription in the general features and ornamental formation, are the letters of the Western Ganga plates of Madhava II (Fig. 106) from Penukonda (Ibid XIV, p. 334). The only difference is that the box-head is lacking. This variety leads us on to the Western Indian script of which the Valabhī inscriptions and the Western Cālukyan, Rāṣṭrakūṭa and other Canarese ones are the most noteworthy, as the Yādava and Gurjjara inscriptions invariably, and Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions frequently, used Nāgarī, and this line of development from Brāhmī merges in the Canarese-Telugu variety. The box-headed type continues with reinforced angularities and emphasised box-head in the grants of the kings of Śarabhapura and other inscriptions from Central India till about the 8th—9th century A.D. This inscription, along with others of its time in South India, begins with such expressions as, *Īitam Bhagavatā* which, may be found in the early Pallava inscriptions noted above. In the Western Ganga plates this is amplified and followed by the lines *Gataghanagaganābhena Padmanābhena*. It is to be noted that the inward indentation to the left for *ja*, *pa*, *ba* is pronounced, *ya* is so formed that there is a regular loop to the left, *la* begins with a large curl larger than its compressed belly.

¹ Hail ! The Lord (Viṣṇu) has been victorious ! From the royal seat at Vijayapaṭṭakara—the great grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Viravarman, the most virtuous, the repository of penance and warriorhood won by the might of his army, who established all rules of conduct according to precept of the *Sāstras*, who was abiding by the Law and immensely great (grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Skandavarman) of very great power and success, with the whole circle of kings subdued by his effulgence.....

ॐ ह्रीं क्लीं नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीमद्वेङ्कटेश्वराय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

FIG. 106.

C.S. del.

ॐ जितम्भगवता गतघनगगनामेन पद्यनामेन श्रीमज्जाह्वेयकुलामल व्योमभा
 स्वस्ति सनभास्करस्य स्वभुजवज्रयजनितसुजनजनपदस्य दारुणारिगणविदारणरणोपा
 लब्धव्रणभूषणस्य काण्वायनसगोत्रस्य श्रीमक्तोङ्कणिवर्मधर्ममहाधिराजस्य पु
 त्रस्य पिष्टुर्न्वागतगुणस्य नानाशास्त्रार्थसद्वाधिगमप्रणीतमतिविशेषस्य नीतिशास्त्र
 स्य वक्तृप्रयोक्तृकुशलस्य सम्यक्प्रजापालनमात्राधिगतराज्यप्रयोजनस्य श्रीमन्मा¹

The development of the Southern variety of Gupta script in Western India and Northern Deccan is found mainly in the inscriptions of the Traikūṛakas, Maitrakas and the Western Cālukyās. Of these, the Maitraka records are in a script that follows palæographically the Junāgadh inscription of Skandagupta (*Fleet C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 56) with frequent affinities to the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta (*ibid.*, p. 79). These letters are at once buxom and more angular in their contour than those in the Western Cālukyān, though the angularity is not so pronounced as in Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi letters. The projecting lower end of letters like *a*, *ā*, *ka*, *ra* form an open rectangle. *Visarga* is indicated by two dashes rather than dots. Similarly dashes take the place of dots in *i*. *Ca* is more after the earlier Western Indian type. The loop of *ṇa* and *ṇa* is broken, as also the central stroke of *ka*, and the limbs are indicated by separate bits of strokes. As in *ca*, so in *bha* this separate formation of the neck of the letter is lacking. *Ma* and *sa* follow the Southern variety of the Gupta letter *intoto*. *Ya* is still of the earlier type, lacking even the indications of a loop to the left. The tail of *la* which encircles the body appears more prominent. *Va* has the contour of a cone

¹ Hail ! Om ! the Lord Padmanābha of the hue of the sky free from clouds has been victorious. Of the prosperous Mādhavavarma, of excellent qualities imbibed from his father, with keen intelligence trained by the understanding of the essential purpose of different sciences, clever in the exposition and practice of the signs of moral codes, who had achieved the purpose of a kingdom only by proper protective rule of his subjects, son of the virtuous Mahārāja, the prosperous Koṅkaṇivarma, of the Kāṇvāyana clan, the Sun lighting up the firmament of the spotless Gāṅga family, who made his territory full of good men by the speedy conquest with the might of his arm, who was adorned by the wounds caused by a host of fierce foes,.....

योदितार्कमण्डलाकारचक्रक्षपितमरारिपाक्षस्य विष्णोः प्रतिमा प्रतिष्ठाप
नाभ्युदयनिमित्तं लङ्गीश्वरनाम ग्रामन्नारायणबह्युपहारार्थं षोडशसंख्येभ्यो ¹

The development of this script during the next three centuries in the Cālukyan area is styled the middle variety by Buhler. This is exemplified by the earlier Cālukyan and Rāstrakūṭa grants. The letters undergo further change and in a couple of centuries they are rounded, *ka* and *ra* having their lower limbs closed to left. The loop of *ya* develops into a full ovoid. The curved lower limb of *ta* predominates over the dwindled upper limb. The tail end of *la* runs around the body with a flourish. The two curved limbs of *bha* separate right from the serif. The limb to right of *ga* and *śa*, rather than that to the left, curls inward terminally. The base of *pa*, *da*, *tha*, *dha*, *ba*, *ma*, *sa*, *ca*, *va*, *ha*, *ja* shows clear notch. The letters are squat and broad. An excellent example of these features is the Nīlgund inscription of the Rāstrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa of the 9th century A.D. from which the following passage (Fig. 109) is chosen (*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, p. 98).

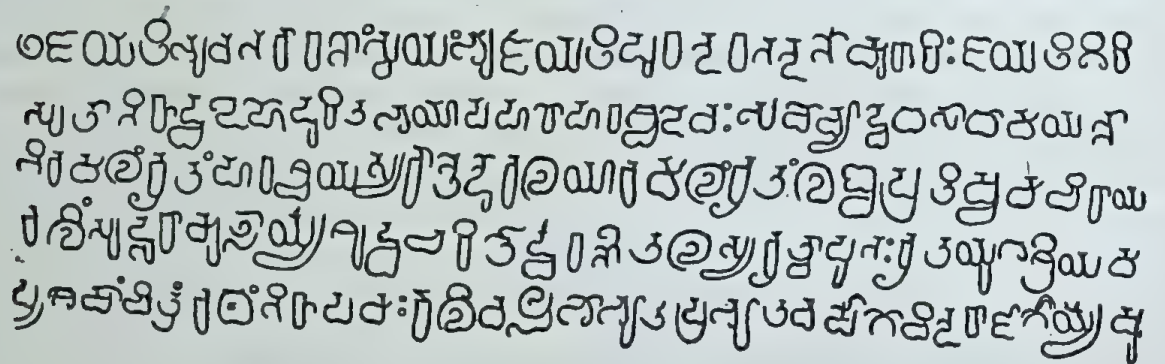


FIG. 109.

C.S. del.

◎ जयति भुवनकारणं स्वयंभूर्जयति पुरन्दरनन्दनो मुरारिः जयतिगिरि
सुतानिरुद्धदेहो दुरितभयापहरो हरश्च देवः स बोध्याद्वेधसा धाम यन्ना
मिकमलं कृतं हरश्च यस्य कान्तेन्दुकलया कमलं कृतं लब्धप्रतिष्ठमचिराय

¹ Hail ! Born of the family of Calkyas, meditative of the feet of the Lord, belonging to the clan of Mānavya the sons of Hārīti, whose heads are purified by the final *avabhṛta* bath after the performance of sacrifices like *Agnistoma*, *Agnicayana*, *Vājapeya*, *Paundarika*, *Bahusuvāna* and *Asvamedha*, Mangalisa, victor in battles, endowed with the three powers (*Prabhu*, *Mantra* and *Utsāha*), full moon in the firmament of the family of Calkyas, with his body embellished by his many good qualities, with his mind set on the truth of the essence of all *Sāstras*, and opulent in great strength, valour and bravery, in the twelfth of his ever prosperous years of reign and (correspondingly) when five hundred years had elapsed from that of the time of the coronation of the Śaka king, his pair of feet tinged by the lustre of the gems on the crowns of kings subdued by him with the edge of his sword held in his hand, his auspicious abode being the earth extending to the four oceans won by him ; greatly devoted to Viṣṇu (*Bhāgavata*), made a cave temple for Viṣṇu, exceeding the height of two men and of wonderful workmanship, extensive in its major and minor parts, ceiling and sides all extremely beautiful to behold, and in it on the full moon day Mahākārtika month having given great gifts to Brāhmins, for establishing gloriously the image of Viṣṇu, who extirpated the hosts of demons (lit. foes of gods) with his discus resembling in shape the solar disc emerging after the deluge, the village Lañjīśvara (was given) for the offering of daily worship to sixteen . . .

◎ नमस्तुंगशिरश्चुंबिचंद्रचामरचारवे त्रैलोक्यनगरारंभम्
 लस्तंभाय शंभवे ॥ वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये
 जगतः पितरौ वंदे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ । ओं नमः शिवा[य]
 ◎ स्वास्ति समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीपृथ्वीवल्लभमहाराजाधिराज
 परमेश्वरपरमभट्टारकतत्त्वाश्रयकुलतिलकचाळुक्या ¹

The latest phase of development which leads on to the form of the letters as they are in modern Canarese is to be found in the latest Cālukyan and Hoysala inscriptions. Here the letters are more rounded and specially in the Hoysala area the letters are as rounded and ornamented as the sculptures themselves. The features already observed in later Cālukyan script continue with greater emphasis. The medial *i, u, ū, r* and other signs and subscripts *ya, ra*, etc., form fine flourishes and loops and sometimes there are decorative designs and floral patterns added terminally to the flourishes of the signs of the letters. The last stage is seen in Vijayanagara script which is the same for Canarese and Telugu. The modern Canarese script with the some peculiar differences from the Telugu script is after the Vijayanagara period. So the parallel developments of Canarese and Telugu scripts in Western and Eastern areas of the Deccan are finally fused together in the Vijayanagara script, to later separate again in the form of two different scripts. The following passage chosen to illustrate the Hoysala script (Fig. 111) is from copper-plates from the Belūr temple dated 1117 A.D. (*Epigraph. Carn. V, p. 137*).

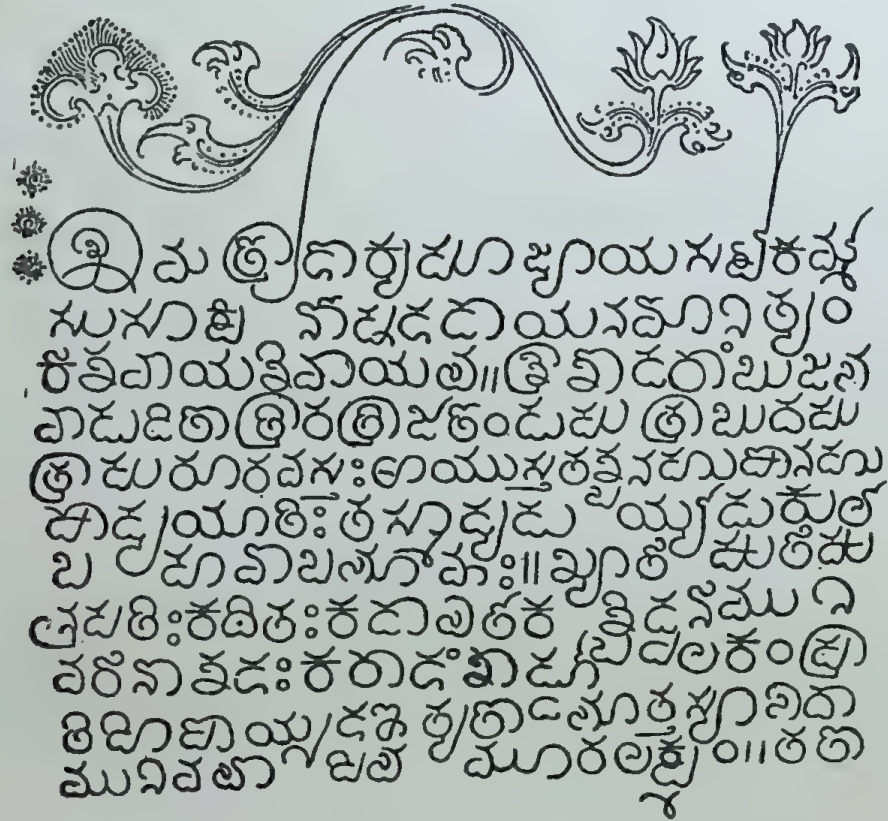


FIG. 111.

C.S. del.

¹ Om ! Obeisance to Śambhu the basic pole for the erection of the three worlds beautiful with the moon chauri-like kissing His lofty head. For proper understanding of words and their connotation I salute Pārvati and Parameśvara, the parents of the universe, who are united closely like a word and its meaning. Om ! Salutation to Śiva. Om ! Hail ! The refuge of the whole world, Śrī Pṛthvivallabha Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara (lit. Suzerain of the kings of kings), the great Lord, the jewel (lit. beauty mark on forehead) of the family of Satyāśraya (ornament of the) Cālukyas.

श्रीमत्रैलोक्यपूज्याय साक्षिकर्म
 सु साक्षिणे फलदाय नमो नित्यं
 केशवाय शिवाय च ॥ श्रीशेदरांबुजभ
 वादुदितोत्रिरत्रिजातेन्दुपुत्रबुधपु
 त्रपुत्ररवस्तः आयुस्ततश्च नहुषो नहु
 षाद्ययातिः तस्माद्यदुर्ग्यदुकुले
 बहवो बभूवुः ॥ ख्यातेषु तेषु
 नृपतिः कथितः कदाचित् कश्चिद्वने मुनि
 वरेण शलः कराळं शर्दूलकं प्र
 ति हि पोयसळ इत्यतोभूत्तस्याभिधा
 मुनिवचोपिचमूरलक्षं ॥ ततो ¹

The development of the Telugu script in South-Eastern Deccan and the coastal area should be studied along with that of the Canarese in the Western area. The Śālankāyana grants from the Krishna valley supply examples of the development of Brāhmī letters after the ornamental forms of the Ikṣvāku and the earliest Pallava inscriptions. The Śālankāyana script is essentially the same as the earlier Brāhmī, but there are no ornamental embellishments. The serif is clearly marked. The lower limb of *a* and *ā* vacillate between running with a flourish as a broad curve and forming an open narrow rectangle as in *ra* and *ta*. The belly of *e* projects too far out to left. The medial *i* and *ī* are marked as a circle with open lower end on top of letter and similar circle with similar circlet inside respectively. There is no loop either for *na* or for *ta*. There is a broad dash across the belly of *tha*. *Ba* occurs sometimes as a plain rectangle, sometimes with inward indentation to the left and sometimes slightly open at the point of indentation. *Ya* forms a small narrow loop to left. The

¹ Adoration always to both Keśava and Śiva who are each individually adorable to the three worlds and witnesses of all acts and the ordainers of the fruit thereof. Atri was born of the one born of the navel lotus of the Lord of Śrī (Viṣṇu); Āyus was born of Purūravas, son of Budha, son of the Moon, born of Atri; from him Nahuḥa, from Nahuḥa, Yayāti; and from him Yadu; in the family of Yadu many were born. Among those renowned (kings) a certain king Sala was once told in the forest by a great sage thus "Poysala" in regard to a ferocious tiger; and hence his name became even so.

tail of *la* surrounds the body. The following passage (Fig. 112) is in Prākṛt, as is usual in early inscriptions of the kind, and is from the plates of Vijayadevavarman (*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 56).

सिंहविजयवेङ्गीपुरा भगवतो
ॐ चित्तरथसामिपादानु
ज्ज्ञातस्त बप्पभट्टारकपादमत्तस्त
परममाहेस्तरस्त सालङ्कायनस्त

यज्ज्ञातस्त बप्पभट्टारकपादमत्तस्त
ॐ चित्तरथसामिपादानु
ज्ज्ञातस्त बप्पभट्टारकपादमत्तस्त

FIG. 112.

C.S. del.

सिरिविजयवेङ्गीपुरा भगवतो

ॐ चित्तरथसामिपादानु

ज्ज्ञातस्त बप्पभट्टारकपादमत्तस्त

परममाहेस्तरस्त सालङ्कायनस्त

२ अस्तमेघयाजिनो

महाराजा सिरिविजयदेववग्मस्त¹

¹ From the victorious Vengipura . . . of king Vijayadevavarman who contemplates on the feet of the Lord Cittarathasvāmi, is a devotee, at the feet of Bappabhattāraka, who is a devout worshipper of Maheśvara, who belongs to the Śāṅkayana family and who has performed the horse sacrifice . . .

A further stage in the development of characters in the Telugu area may be seen in the Viṣṇukunḍin plates. Here *ta* shows a loop which is absent in *na*. The base of the left limb of *ya* develops a notch and the letter shows the tendency to develop its future shape. Both the base and top line of *ja* are notched and are so marked separately above and below the middle stroke that the beginnings of the future shape of the letter may be seen here. The notch on the base of letters, like *pa*, *ba*, *dha*, *va*, *ma* and *ṣa*, is pronounced. *La* is an open rectangle with terminals curved in at the top. *La* is shaped like *da* with a curve added terminally. The medial vowel signs are the same as the earlier ones. The following passage (Fig. 113) is from the Cikkulla plates of Vikramendravarman II (Ibid IV, p. 193).

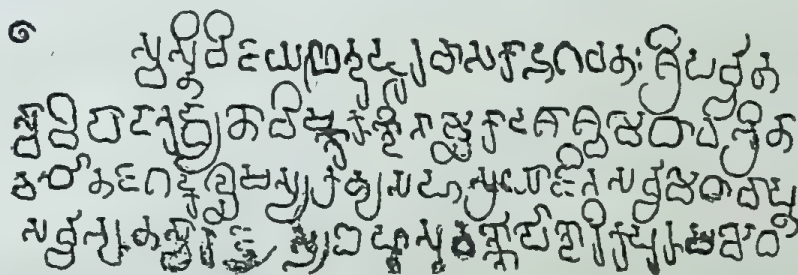


FIG. 113.

C.S. del.

© स्वस्ति विजयलेन्दुकरवासकाङ्गवतः श्रीपर्वत
स्वामिपादानुध्यातो विष्णुकुण्डिनामेकादशाश्वमेधावभिता
वधौतजगत्कल्मषस्य क्रतुसहस्रयाजिन सर्वमेधावाप्त
सर्वभूतस्वाराज्यस्य बहुसवर्णपौण्डरीकपुरुषमेध¹

The advent of the Eastern Cālukyas marks the beginning of Telugu literature, as the earliest Telugu records are of this period. The earliest literary works in Telugu, including the famous *Bhārata* or even Nannecōḍa's *Kumārasambhava*, are comparatively late productions not to speak of *Bhāgavata* of Potana, Śrīnātha's *Naiṣadha*, or the still later works of the time of Kṛṣṇadevarāya. The earliest Telugu literature is from the inscriptions. The inscription recording the achievements of general Paṇḍaranga is an example. The earliest script of the Eastern Cālukyas, of the time of Kubja Viṣṇuvarddhana, was no doubt akin to that of the Western Cālukyas under Pulakeśi, the brother of Viṣṇuvardhana. But there is a later local development of the script, which however retains its essential affinities and relationship with the parent script derived from the Western area. The passage chosen

¹ Hail ! From the camp at victorious Leṇḍulūru (Mahārāja Indrabhaṭṭarakavarman) that meditator on the feet of the Lord of Śrīparvata, belonging to the family of Viṣṇukunḍins (great grandson of Mahārāja Mādhavavarman), who cleansed the stain of the world by the purificatory bath after the performance of eleven horse sacrifices, who performed a thousand sacrifices, who obtained the happiness of all beings through his sacrifices, who (performed) *Bahusavarna*, *Paṇḍarika*, *Puruṣamedha* . . .

(Fig. 114) here is from Viṣṇuvardhana's Timmapuram grant (Ibid IX, p. 318). Noteworthy features of the letters are : *ka* and *ra* are definitely shorter than previously, *ka* showing a definite rectangle to the left below ; *ta* tends to become a curve below the vertical stroke crowned with serif, a tendency which is more marked in its later development ; the right limb of *ma* above the belly leans forward ; *ya* develops a circle to the left ; *ga* and *śa* develop a terminal inward curve to left ; a small stroke across the middle stroke of *ja* determines the future form of the letter ; medial *i* is indicated by curling the left end of the curl denoting short *i*.

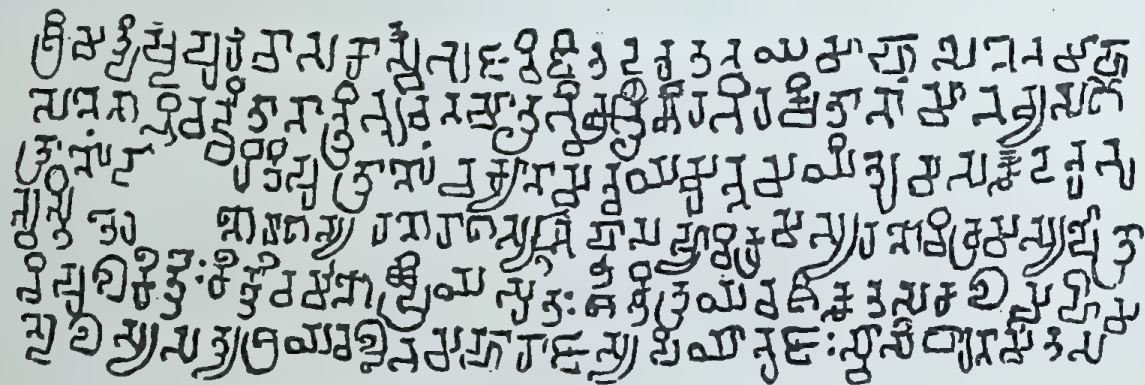


FIG. 114.

C.S. del.

श्रीमत्पिष्टपुरावासकात्स्वभुजविजितदनुतनयमाहासेनेन माहा
सेनेनाभिवर्द्धितानान्त्रिभुवनमातृभिर्मामृभिरभिरक्षितानां मानव्यसगो
त्राणां हारितिपुत्राणां चकचानामन्वयमुन्नमयितुमसकृदनुभू
स्वस्ति तेरणरागस्य रणरागस्य नप्तासह्यविक्रमस्य रणावक्रमस्य पौत्रो
विपुलकीर्तेः कीर्तिवर्मणः प्रियसुतः शक्तित्रयवशिकृत सकलमहीभ
ण्डलस्य सत्यश्रयवल्लभमहाराजस्य पियानुजः स्वासिचारनामितस¹

In a couple of centuries the letters undergo a change that marks the later script. The belly of *ka* and *ra* is definitely formed as an elongate rectangle with rounded corners. *Kha* with a large loop to left appears very like the modern letter. The left terminal inward curve of *ga*, and *śa* is still present, though the separate serif with neck-like stroke below it distinguishes this along with other letters of this alphabet. Of the three distinct strokes composing *ja*, the top and base are notched, the former curling in terminally to left. *Da*, *ḍa*, *dha*, *pa*,

¹ Hail ! From the camp at prosperous Piṣṭapura (Viṣṇuvardhana) great grandson of Rāṇarāga who had often experienced the taste of battle to elevate the family of the Cālukyas of the Mānavya clan and sons of Hāriti, fostered by Mahāsena (Kārttikeya) who was victorious over the great army of the sons of Danu (Demons), and protected by the (seven) Mothers, the very mothers of the three worlds ; grandson of Rāṇavikrama whose valour was unbearable ; dear son of Kirttivarman of great fame ; dear younger brother of Satyāśraya Vallabha Mahārāja who subjugated the whole expanse of the earth by his triple power (Śaktitraya-Prabhu, Mantra and Utsāha) ; who by the edge of his sword subdued . . .

and *ha* closely resemble the later form in shape. *Na* develops loop to top left. *Ta* has a fine leftward curve starting in a curl to right. The notch of the base of *tha* and *dha* is marked and there is a circlet in the belly of the former. *Ba* is open to left and is notched at the top and base and terminally curves in at both ends. The two strokes composing *bha* separate immediately beneath the serif, and *ya* is nearly modern. *La* with diminutive body and large curve running around it is different from the earlier type and is definitely modern. *Sa* has terminal curve to left and short neck for serif. The following passage (Fig. 115) is from the Masulipatam plates of Vijayāditya III (Ibid V, p. 122) and is a fine verse composed by one of the poets responsible for the composition of the Eastern Cālukyan plates.

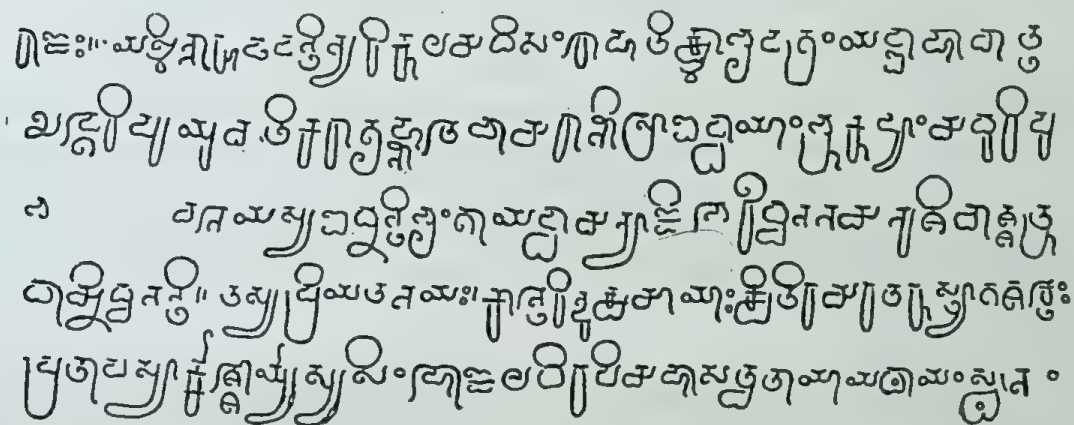


FIG. 115.

C.S. del.

राजः ॥ यस्मिन्नारूढदन्तिन्यरिकुलमधिसरोहति क्षमाभृदग्रं यद्वाहावात्
खड्गे रिपुयुवतिकरा गृहते चामराणि आबद्धायां भुकृतयां मधु रिपु
मवने यस्य वध्नन्ति भृंगा यद्धामन्वाजिमैरीध्वननमनु शिवाश्शत्रु
षास्त्रि ध्वनन्ति ॥ तस्य प्रियतनयः । कान्तेरिन्दुक्षमायाः क्षितिरमरतरुस्यागशक्तेः
प्रतापस्यार्क्षशौर्यस्य मिहो जलाधिरापि महासत्त्वतायामथायं स्थानं ¹

The development of this script in the tenth century is remarkable. The letters are cast in a square mould with rounded corners and form a special type, easily distinguished from all earlier and later types by an individuality all their own. The serif in this script is somewhat thick and nail-like, while in the next century it is more or less V-shaped. The

¹ King. When he mounted the elephant his hosts of foes climbed the tops of mountains ; when his hand grasped the sword the hands of the wives of his enemies took up the chauris ; when he knit his brows the bees collected honey in the palaces of his foes ; and after the sound of the war drum in his palace the she-jackals howled in the mansions of his enemies. His dear son ; as the moon is for light, the earth for patience, the celestial tree for power to bestow the sun for brilliance, the lion for bravery, the ocean for great nobility, (so he was) the abode . . .

मधुकरनिकरपरिचुंबितचरणसरसिरुहयुग
 लो युलोचनपदकमलविलसद्विरेफायमाणो मा
 नोन्नतोद्धतः समस्तलोकः समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीविज
 यादित्यमहाराजधिराजपामेश्वरः परममद्वारकः परमब्र
 ह्मण्यः मातापितृपादानुध्यातः पावुनवारविषये प्रान्दोरु
 द्वादशग्रामनिवासिनो राष्ट्रकूटप्रमुखान्कुटुंबिनस्समाहू¹

The emphasis on the serif in the script just considered becomes most pronounced in the 11th century letters of the Eastern Cālukyas. The serif is V-shaped and is nearly as big as the body of the letter itself. The first stage in the formation of the modern form of *a*, *ā* and *i* appears in this script, though it is a century later for *u* as also for medial vowel signs. *Ka* and *ra* are formed by a circle crowned by the V-shaped serif, but *ka* has a horizontal stroke between the circle and the serif in addition. The serif is prominent in *ga* as in all other letters but in the case of *gha* the right limb is slightly upward. In *ca* and *bha*, the two limbs separate beneath the serif which settles itself on top of the right limb and the top curve of the left limb is compressed by the squeezed form of the letter. The serif appears similarly in *cha*. The loop to top left of *ja* opens a bit now and continues so later, and the tip of the curve to right is not thickened serif-like, as in the previous century. The loop to top left of *ṇa* opens out giving the letter the modern shape that continues thereafter. The curl of *ta* to right, above which the V-shaped serif is perched, gives it an individuality. The bottom of *tha* and *dha* is broken at the point of the notch. The vertical stroke of *na* with serif above, glides softly to merge at its bottom in the right limb. The left end of *pa* beneath serif extends horizontally towards the vertical stroke, forming a box belly for the letter. A circlet separates the vertical stroke by its presence in the centre for *pha*. The loop to top left of *ba* enlarges and opens a bit, as in *ja*, and the bottom breaks at the notch, as in *dha* and *tha*. *Ya* and *ra* are more or less in the shape of the modern letter, except for the peculiar serif. *La* sheds

¹. When that king ruled, the land was beautiful with abundance of many successful crops, had cows always yielding milk, was free from fear, drought and other troubles, disease and thieves. That suzerain lord of kings, great sovereign, highly pious, meditator of the feet of his parents, whose pair of lotus feet is kissed by swarms of bees in the shape of the numerous gems set on the surface of the crowns of all enemy kings, who shines as a bee on the lotus feet of Brahmā, elevated in his self respect and of superior bearing, representing all the world, the refugee of the whole world, Śrī Vijayāditya, called the husbandmen including the principal ones like the Rāṣṭrakūṭas living in the twelve villages of Prāndoru in the Pāvunavāra district . . .

the serif-like thick tip to right seen in the previous century. The following passage chosen (Fig. 117) is from the Korumelli plates of Rājarāja I (*Ind. Ant.* XIV p. 48).

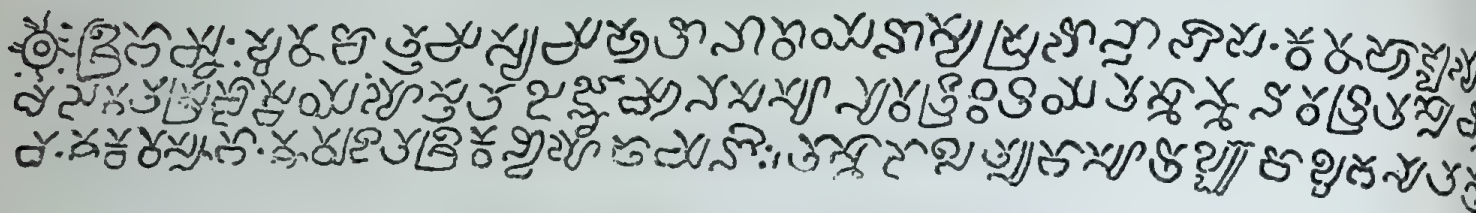


FIG. 117.

C.S. del.

© श्रीधाम्नः पुरुषोत्तमस्य महतो नारायणस्य प्रभोर्त्तर्भापिकरुहाद्वभू

व जगतस्तथा स्वयंभूस्तत जज्ञे मानससूनुरत्रिरिति य तस्मान्मनोरत्रितस्सोमो

वंशकरस्तुधांशुरुदितश्रीकिण्ठचूडामणिः । तस्मादासीत्सुधासूतेर्बुधो बुधनुतस्त ¹

The best example of proto-Telugu script is that of the time of the Kākatīyas. The script here is most graceful and the letters take their final shape, as from here onwards the shape of the letters undergoes but little change here and there; as for instance the small curve below for *bha* and *pha* appears a century or two later, and is substituted by a vertical stroke in Vijayanagara and later script. The Chebrolu inscription of Jaya (*Epigraph. Ind.* V, p. 142) from which the following passage (Fig. 118) is chosen is in very good preservation and presents an excellent example of the beautiful script of the Kākatīyas. In this the modern shape of *a* and *ā* appears with the body within the sweeping curve reduced to a horizontal stroke, terminally curved to left in both with an additional outer curve in the case of *ā* to right. *U* assumes the modern shape with definite horn above and small horizontal stroke in the belly. From this time onwards the serif is a broader angle and less pronounced than in the 11th century. *Ca*, *ḍa*, *ṭa*, *ḍha*, *da*, *pa*, *ma*, *la*, *va* practically assume the modern form. *Cha* forms a small loop at its basal notch. The break in the base of *tha* and *dha* is discarded, though it continues for *bha*. The circlet breaking the right vertical stroke of *pha* is replaced by a small curved stroke, as in contemporary Hoysala script. *Śa* changes into a vertical stroke curved in towards the left terminally at both ends, as in slightly earlier Western Cālukyan and contemporary Hoysala scripts.

¹ From the great navel lotus of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the best among Puruṣas and the abode of Śrī, arose the self born (Brahmā) creator of the universe; from him was born his mind-born son known as Atri; from that sage Atri was born the moon, the progenitor of the race, ambrosiac in his rays, and the crest jewel of Śiva whose neck is tinged on. From that producer of posīthwambroasi arose Budha and from him Budha's son . . .

ಪ್ರಸನ್ನಿ: ಜಯತಿಹರಿವರಾಹ: ಪ್ರಮನ
 ಛಾಂತಪೃಥ್ವಿ ಸ್ತನರವರಿರಂಚಾರಂಚ
 ಸ್ತೃಷ್ಟಸ್ಯಯಸ್ಯ || ಮಧರೇಮಧುರಿತಾಂಚ:
 ಸಂಪಯಪ್ರಯ ರಾಶಿ: ಮನರವಿರಧನ
 ಯುಕ್ತದಮೂರ್ತರಮೂರಿ || ಛಾರಂಚಸ್ಯ
 ವಿರೇವ್ಯದಂತಮು ಪುಧಂ ಗೌರಿರವಾಸ್ತು
 ಪ್ರವದ್ರತ್ಯಗಸಂಪದಿಲಾಸದಿ ಪರಲಿತಾ
 ಗಂಗಾಪ್ತುನಾಧಾಂರಂಚ: ದವಸ್ಯ ತ್ರಿಮುರ
 ದ್ರೂದಗವಿಜಯಿನಾ ಮುಕ್ತಮನಮಸ್ತ
 ರೇವಿಸ್ತಾಂರಂಪದಿವ್ರಮಾವಿಜಯತೆ
 ಮಾದಾಸುವಾಂಶಿ: ರೇಲಿ || ಪಾಯಾಕ್ಷಪ
 ರಿವತ್ತಮಾನಲದಾರಿಪ್ರಾಕ್ಷಾರಮಾಸ್ತು
 ಲಯಸ್ತಾಯಂ ರೌಲರಂ ಗರೈದುರೇಶ್ವ
 ರ್ನನಮಂದಿಗಿನಿ || ದವಸ್ತು ರಚದಿವರಿವ್ರ
 ಮರೇಲಿಸಂರಂಚಸಂಚಾದಿನ: ಶಂಚಿರಂಚು
 ಪುಧಂ ಗವಾಧ್ಯರಂಚಾರಂಚಾಯಲಂಚಾಡರಂ ||

FIG. 118.

G.S. del.

ಸ್ವಸ್ತಿಶ್ರೀ: । ಜಯತಿಹರಿವರಾಹ: ಪ್ರಮನ ||
 ಚಾಂತಪೃಥ್ವಿ ಸ್ತನರವರಿರಂಚಾರಂಚ
 ದತ್ತಸ್ಯ ಯಸ್ಯ । ಪುಷ್ಕಕಚುಲಕಿತಾಂಚ:
 ಸಸಂಭವಸ್ತೋಧರಾಶಿ: ಪುನರವಿರಣ್ಣನಿ
 ಧ್ಯತ್ವೇದಪುರೈರಪುರಿ । ಹೇರಂಚಸ್ಯ
 ವಿಕಲ್ಪಪದಂತಮುಕ್ತಂ ಗೌರಿರಹಸ್ಯಾ

त्सवप्रत्यासंनविलासदीपकलिका
 गंगामृणाळंक्रुरः । देवस्य त्रिपुर
 द्रुहो विजयिना पुष्पेषुणा मस्त
 के विन्यस्तांकुशविभ्रमा विजयते
 चूडासुधांशोः कला ॥ पायाद्वः प
 रिवर्त्तमानलहरप्राग्भारमास्फा
 लयन्सायंकालतरंगकेळिषुकरास्क
 दंने मंदाकिनी । देवस्यारमटीपरिभ्र
 मकलासंरंभसंभाविनः शंभोरंबु
 मृदङ्गवाद्यरचनारंभाय लंबोदरः ॥ ¹

The later development of this script is little, and, except for some minor changes, the letters are practically the same as in Kākatīya inscriptions. *Ta* develops a tendency towards an occasional terminal curve to the left but this is more regular in the Vijayanagara script. *Bha* has occasionally a small curved stroke beneath it, which however becomes an invariable vertical stroke in the letter of the Vijayanagara script. The horizontal line, defining the upper contour of the belly of *ṣa*, is broken up to appear as a stroke against the right vertical, and this form continues thereafter. The following passage (Fig. 119) is from an inscription of the time of Śrīnātha, the famous Telugu poet, who is mentioned here as the Director of Public Instruction in the kingdom of the Redḍis. A portion of it is in Telugu though it runs some length in Sanskrit, the official language in India all over ; and we can well imagine what a manuscript of the *Śrīngāranaiṣadha* of Śrīnātha would have been like by a look at the letters expressing the Telugu verses of the inscription. The inscription is from Phiraṅgipuram in Guntur District (Ibid. XI p. 322).

¹ Hail ! Prosperity ! Victorious is the boar-shaped Hari by whose continuous flow of sweat was filled the ocean (lit. mass of water) the mass of water in which was drained by his horripulation as he was excited in the act of embrace of the heavy breasts of the lovingly agitated Pṛthvī. The digit of the crest-jewel moon is victorious as the probable budding tusk of Heramba (Ganeśa), or as the sportive lamp flame in the vicinity of Gaurī's secret sport, or as the lotus bud of the Ganges, or charming as the goad placed on the head of the god who is the foe of Tripura by his victor, the flower-arrowed Manmatha. May Lambodara (Ganeśa) protect you, who in his evening sports of patting the waves of the river Mandākinī (Gangā) strikes the surface of the rolling waves for responding to the movements of the artistic *Arabhaṭi* dance of the Lord Śambhu by starting the sounding of the water-drum (*Jalataranga*).

ದವಾಮುಖ್ಯಾಃ ಬಹಿರಾಗಂಧವ್
 ರಗರಾತ್ರಸಾಃ ಸ್ಥೂಪರಾ ವೀಚಗಾಠಾ
 ನಿಸಂಧಯಂತಿ ಜಲಾಕಯಂತಿ ಟಂಕಯ
 ಸ್ವಗಾವಸ್ತು ಬಬಂಧಿತ್ವಚ್ಚತಾಜಲಂಧ್ರ
 ಗಚ್ಛಿ ಮಮುಕ್ಷುಃ ಪುನಃ ಪುನಃ ದಲ್ಲಲಂ
 ಲಚ್ಛಿ ಫಸ್ತಾಽಯಂತಿ ಪಿತ್ತರೋಪಸ್ಥಿತ್ಯ
 ಂತಿ ಬಹಿರಾಗಮಃ ಲಬನಃ ಸಕುಲಜಾಠ
 ಯುಕ್ತಕಂಠರಿಚ್ಛಿತಿ || ವಿಷ್ಣು ದಿಕ್ಪಾತಿ
 ನಾಹಿ ಬಹಿರಾಗಮಃ ಪುನಃ ಲಕರಾಠಾ
 ಕರಾಠಾ ಪಾಂನಿಕ್ತಂಧ್ರವಾಸನಾತಿ

ಕಪಟಮಾಕಂಠೇ ಸ್ಥಿರವಾಚುರವೈರಿ
 ಮುರಚ್ಛಿಽಯಂತಿ ಬಹಿರಾಗಮಃ
 ಯುರಚ್ಛಿ ಮಮುಕ್ಷುಃ ಪುನಃ ಪುನಃ ದಲ್ಲಲಂ
 ತ್ರಮುಕ್ತಮುಕ್ತವಿಚ್ಛಿತಿ ಮುಲಪಿ
 ಂಡಿಂಶಿ ಪದವಿಗಂಠಂ ಂಬಸಂಪತ್ತು
 ನಿಶಾಸ್ತಾಂ ಬಾಹುಪಾಂ ಬುಸನಾಪಿ
 ಸಸಂಪತ್ತು ಪ್ರಸವಗಂಠಂ ಬಾಹು
 ನಾಮುಲಪಿ ಬಹಿರಾಗಮಃ
 ಬಹಿರಾಗಮುಲಪಿ ತಂ ಗಟ್ಟಪದಿಯೆ
 ಪದಿಯೆ ಬಂಗಿ ಸರಿ ಪತ್ತು ಸಸಂಪತ್ತು
 ವಾಂಪಾತಲಗಂ ಬಿರವಾಕಿಯ ಗುಮುಪಿ
 ಗಣಪಾಯ ಮಮುಕ್ಷುಃ ಪುನಃ ಪುನಃ
 ಮುಮುಪಿ ಮುಮುಕ್ಷುಃ ಪುನಃ ಪುನಃ

FIG. 119.

G.S. del.

देवा मनुष्याः पितरो गन्धर्वो

रगराक्षसाः । स्थावराणि च भूता

नि संश्रयन्ति जलाशयं । तटाके य

स्य गावस्तु पिबन्ति तृषिता जलं । मृ

గపక్షిమనుష్యాశ్చ సోశ్వమేఘఫలం
 లభేత్ । ఆస్ఫోటయన్తి పితరః ప్రన్య
 ితి పితామహాః । అపినః స కులే జాతో
 యస్తటాకం కరిష్యాతి ॥ విద్యాధికారి శ్రీ
 నాథో వీరశ్రీవేమభూపతేః । అకరోదా
 కరో వాచాం నిర్మలం ధర్మశాసనం ॥ శ్రీ

క పటసూకరమైన కైటభాసురవైరి
 భురపుటంబులం బరిక్షుణ్ణము
 య్యో ! రఘుకులలోద్భవాధనుర్యం
 త్ర ముక్తరైస చిచ్చురమ్ముల వె
 ండింజేవడలుగ 1/0 గుంభసంభవు
 నిహస్తాంభోరుహంబున నాపా
 సనంబయి హ్రాసముండె 1/0 భాషా
 గముల నచ్చభల్లగోలాంగూలక
 పియూధములచేతం గట్టువడియె ।
 వనధియేభంగిసరివచ్చు ననంగవచ్చు
 నారసాతల గంధీరవారియగుచునప
 గతాపాయమగుచు శోచాధ్యవగ
 చుననుపమందైన సంతానవనధితోడ 1

The Vijayanagara monarchs ruled over the Canarese and Telugu areas ; and the script used for their inscriptions both in Telugu and Canarese was the same. Special characteristics that distinguish the modern Canarese characters from Telugu appear later. In the development of the Telugu script from the early script the only noteworthy feature is the small

¹ Gods, men, forefathers, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, immobile objects, all resort to a tank (lit. reservoir of water). That person gains the fruit of an *Aśvamedha* sacrifice in whose tank thirsty cows and other animals, birds and men drink water. Fathers pat themselves and grandfathers dance about in glee (at the thought) that indeed he is born in our family who will dig a tank. Śrīnātha, a mine of literature and the Director of Public Instruction of the heroic king Vema composed this pure charter of charity.

Prosperity. It (ocean) was well trampled by the hoofs of the enemy of the demon Kaiṭabha (Viṣṇu) when he assumed the guise of a boar ; it dried up at the heat of the fiery arrows released from the bow of the scion of the Raghu family (Rāma) ; it diminished having become a mouthful sip in the form of the lotus hand of the pitcher-borne sage Agastya ; (bridged across) with boulders it got fettered at the hands of bears, langurs and monkey troops. How can this ocean be said to be equal to this peerless lotus tank (dug) for progeny, which is full of water deep enough to reach the netherworld, free from mishaps and beautiful to behold.

vertical stroke below aspirated letters, as in the case of *bha*, *tha* and *dha*, or, in the place of a small curved stroke, as in the case of *pha*. The letters are generally compressed and height-wise. The following passage (Fig. 120) is from the stone inscription in the Raṅgasvāmi temple at Hampi (*S. Ind. Inscr.* IV, p. 40).

ఇగ్గణదిపతయే నమః॥ లక్ష్మీచంద్రానుభంగ
 సుఖతాపబ్ధాద్యైవమాలసంనాభితామరససమంబ
 జుషానాథగిరీరాజభూతిమృదేపరయోద సంకమసయా
 త్రిప్రేపగూర్ధాద్రధంపాయాన్తాద సృజాలతెచ్చధరణి
 పౌలంముదిమార్ధవః॥ యజ్ఞయాచుడయరావవాసావో
 హంబులు ౧౪౬౭ ఆగునెంటి విశ్వావసు సంవత్సర శ్రైతశుద్ధ ౩ గురువారము నాండు
 శ్రీ మన్మహారాజాధిరాజ రాజపరమేశ్వర శ్రీ వరప్రతాప శ్రీ వీరసదాశివమహా
 రాయలు విద్యానగరమందు రత్నపింహాసనారూఢులై పృథ్వీరాజ్యము వికృష్టమై 1

FIG. 120.

C.S. del.

श्रीगणधिपतये नमः ॥ लक्ष्मीतुंगकुचानुभंग
 सुखतो लब्धो हृशोर्मीलनं नाभीतामरसेन मीलन
 जुषा नाथे गिरो निहृते । प्रेमावेशतया विशंकमनया
 प्रीत्योपगूढो दृढं पायान्माहनुपालतिम्मघरणी
 पालं मुदा माधवः ॥ ११ यज्ज्याचुडय राववासावो

హంబులు ౧౪౬౭ ఆగునెంటి విశ్వావసు సంవత్సర శ్రైతశుద్ధ ౩ గురువారము నాండు
 శ్రీ మన్మహారాజాధిరాజ రాజపరమేశ్వర శ్రీ వరప్రతాప శ్రీ వీరసదాశివమహా
 రాయలు విద్యానగరమందు రత్నపింహాసనారూఢులై పృథ్వీరాజ్యము వికృష్టమై 1

¹ Salutation to the Lord of Ganas. With his eyes closed in joy at the rubbing of the high breasts of Lakṣmī and consequently as the navel lotus closed up covering the Lord of Speech (Brahmā) and being freely, lovingly and closely embraced by her (Lakṣmī), may Mādhava joyously protect Mādanpāla Timma.

Prosperity. In the victorious and prosperous ; Śālivāhana Śaka year 1492 on this day of Viśvāvasu, bright fortnight of Caitra 3, Thursday, when the royal lord king of kings Śrī Virapratāpa Śrī Virasadaśiva Mahārāja was seated on his jewelled throne in the city of Vidyānagara and with a single umbrella raised only over his head ruled the earth.

The earliest stages in the development of the Grantha-Tamil script show close affinities to the early Canarese-Telugu variety. The script of the time of Mahendravarman I and even Narasimhavarman I is closely akin to the early common variety all over South India and the Deccan. But from the end of the 7th century onwards an individuality is developed by Grantha-Tamil script which is continued with greater emphasis later. The psychological effect of the language for developing its own script may be noticed in the fact that the script and the development is almost the same in Coḷa, Pāṇḍya and Cera areas except that a modified cursive form of the script known as Vaṭṭeluttu occurs in the Southernmost Pāṇḍya and Cera areas. The script, on the other hand, develops differently in the Telugu and the Canarese districts. The influence of Pallava script has been so great that its prototype is found in distant corners of South-Eastern Asia and the islands. The Pallava script of the early part of the 7th century A.D. is more or less akin to the earlier type but there are many varieties of it, all belonging to the same time, as Jouveau Dubreuil has ably demonstrated (Dubreuil, p. 39). There are the florid and simple varieties. The inscriptions of Mahendravarman in his cave temples and the different Birudas incised at Mahābalipuram on the Dharmarājaratha and other monuments are examples. The four lines given below are expressed in four different varieties of the script, which is generally known as Pallava Grantha, as may be seen from the four types of *a*, two types of *ma* and *ya* and three types of *na* in the four lines. These (Fig. 121) are all from the Dharmarājaratha (*Epigraph Ind.* X, p. 1).

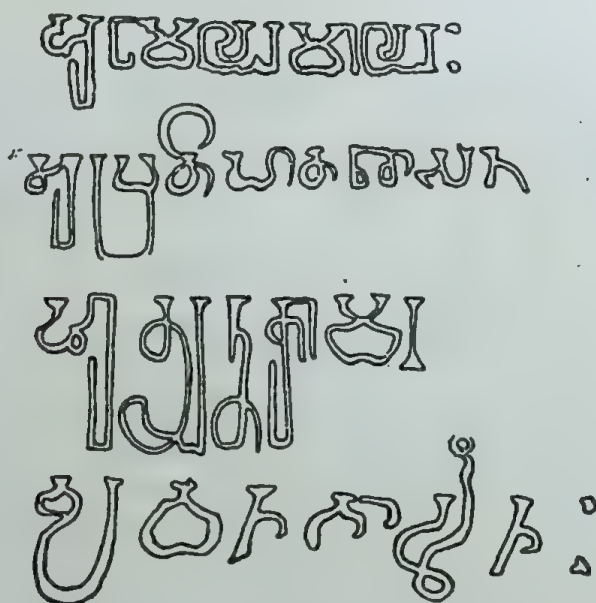


FIG. 121.

C.S. del.

अमेयमायः
अप्रतिहतशासन
अत्यन्तकाम ।
अवनभाजनः¹

Of slightly later date, but showing definitely an advance towards the regular formation of the Grantha-Tamil variety, to which it belongs, is the line given below (Fig. 122). This script is quite similar to the example which is given next and is full of flourishes.

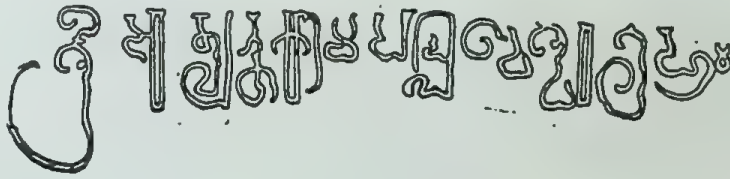


FIG. 122.

C.S. del.

श्री अत्यन्तकामपञ्चवेश्वरगृहम्²

The following selection (Fig. 123) from the inscription of Rājasimha (i.e., Narasimha-varman II) in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram (*S. Ind. Inscr. I*, p. 13) supplies an excellent example of typical Pallava Grantha of the end of the 7th century A.D. It also presents the noble type of verses in Sanskrit prepared about the time and which enrich Sanskrit literature in lithic records. In the case of *a*, *ā* and *i*, parallel vertical stroke to right characterises the letters in Grantha. The loop to left, afterwards characteristic of *a* and *ā*, starts now, as also the broad and sweeping curve to right lower end added to *ā*. In the case of *i* in Grantha, the usual notched horizontal stroke is curved in to left and continued vertically down to right, the two dots being converted into circlets. *U* has hook-shaped head and diagonal body line. *E* develops a loop and breaks considerably from the parent type. Medial *ā* is a small zigzag stroke over a crescent added near the serif of a letter. Medial *i*, *ī*, *u*, *ū* are more or less ornamental developments with flourishes of 5th century Pallava medial signs. *E* and *ai* medial are a single and double curl, the latter, one below another, to the left of a letter. *O* medial is a combination of *e* and *ā* medial signs to the left and right top of a letter. *Ka* and *ra* are characterised by parallel vertical stroke, the former with a cross stroke curled down at both ends in addition. A prominent curl to left and looped body represent *kha*. *Ga* and *śa* retain the old form but slowly an outer curve is added to left,

¹ He of incomprehensible clever designs.

He of unquestionable command.

He of intense love.

He the receptacle of the world.

² The abode (temple) of Śrī Atyantakāmapallaveśvara (Śiva established by the Pallava Atyantakāma).

and *śa* and *tha* and *ṣa* substitute the central stroke and dot by a curve added inside to the right. *ṣa* develops zigzag contour that changes its form. *ṭa* tends to run diagonally. *Na* slowly spreads itself like a pulled wire coil. *Tha* and *dha* open to right top, where the side is straightened somewhat. The curved limb moving away from the vertical stroke of *na* is to the right, not left, as usual. *Bha* at first is strangely shaped like a triskele, but is later somewhat like the Nāgarī letter of the time. *Ya* develops a narrow loop to left. *La* is at first angular, after the earlier model, but later becomes more or less like the Cālukyan letter, a broad flourish encircling the small body stroke.

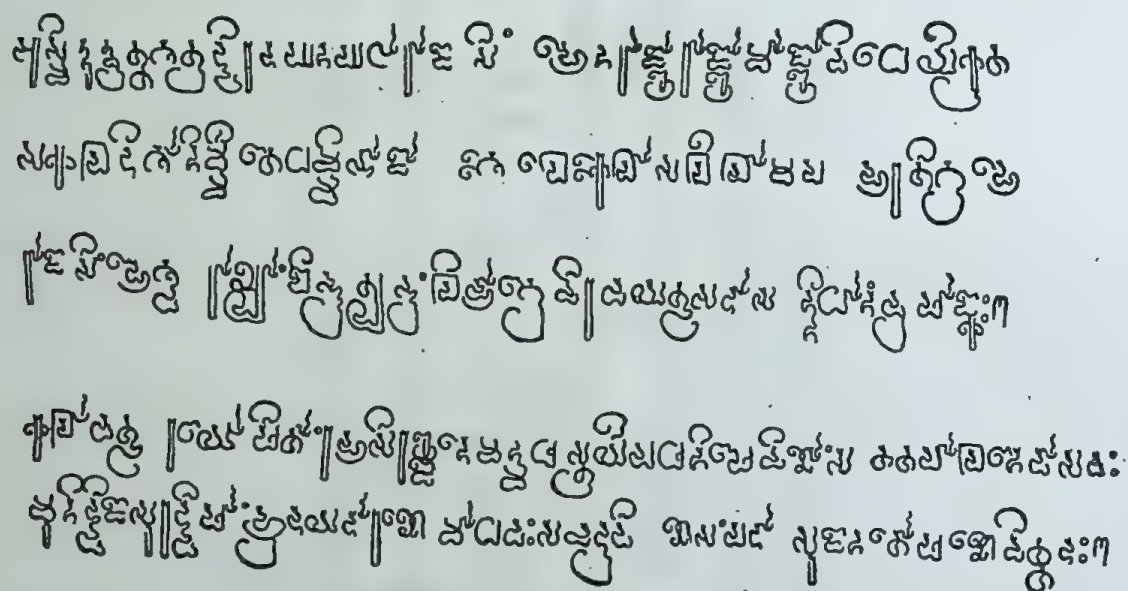


Figure 123 shows a sample of early Kannada script. The text is written in a cursive style with various letters and a decorative flourish. The script is identified as being from the 5th century CE.

FIG. 123.

C.S. del.

अस्मिन्नुत्तशत्रुद्विरदधनघटाराजसिंहेन राज्ञा राज्ञामाज्ञाविधेयीकृत
 सकलदिशानिर्मिते धर्ममाजा शैले कैलासलीलामपहरति गृहे
 राजसिंहेश्वराख्यां विभ्रत्यभ्रंलिहाग्रे विरचयतु सदा सुन्निधानं वृषाङ्कः ॥
 कलाचतुरयोषितां रहति रज्जने मन्मयस्त्रयीपथनिषेविणां सततपालने वासवः ॥
 मुनिद्विजसुराद्विषां हृदयदारणे माधवः सच द्रविणसंपदा सुजनतोषणे वित्तदः ॥¹

¹ May the Bull-bannered Lord (Śiva) always make himself present in this mansion (temple) of stone bearing the epithet of Rājasimheśvara, robbing the beauty of Mount Kailāsa as it were, with its pinnacles licking the sky as it were, built by the righteous king of kings (Rājasimha) a royal lion to the packed troops of elephants of enemies who made all the quarters obedient to his command. Verily Cupid is he in pleasing in private ladies of good aesthetic taste, Indra is he ever protecting the followers of the three Vedas, Mādhava (Viṣṇu) he is in tearing the heart of the enemies of sages, the twice-born and the gods, Kubera he is in pleasing good men with abundance of wealth.

The Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman I (Fig. 124) shows the normal variety of Grantha script about the end of the 7th century A.D. from which later development can be studied. This inscription is also most valuable, as it supplies the earliest Tamil characters developed after the age when Brahmi itself was used for inscriptions in Tamil. The development of Grantha and Tamil is observed at once in this grant, as it is partly in Sanskrit and partly in Tamil. The development of Grantha is illustrated in the passage given below (*S. Ind. Inscr. I* p. 148). *A* and *ā* show the loop to left. *E* is drawn like *Z* with its tail end drawn out in a loop and curve above in continuation. *I* has only a single large circlet to left. *Kha* is shaped like a clumsy Arabic 2 only with looped belly. The tail end of *ṣa* is looped and continued in a curve above it. *ṭa* is as usual C-shaped, but with a stroke below. *Na* is a drawn out coil. *Ta* has a prominent loop which *na* lacks and the curved limb of *na* usually to left is here to right. The base and top of *ba* are connected by a diagonal stroke. *La* is composed of a small double curve, encircled by its own tail as a broad flourish. *Va* is pear-shaped with serif above. *Ṣa* has an almost parallel outer curve to left and an inward terminal curve to right. *Ṣa* is more or less like *pa* with terminal loop to right. *Sa* is more or less after the Nāgarī pattern. Of the medial vowel signs *u* and *ū* are rather exaggerated. *La* here, as in Canarese-Telugu charters, is written vertically in zigzag course.

परमेश्वर इव सर्वाधिकदर्शनः परमेश्वरवर्मा भरत इव सर्वदमन सगर इव कृता
समञ्जसत्यागः कर्ण इव पुष्कलांगो यः प्रियकव्यो ययातिरिव अनुपनतानां राज्ञा
यस्याज्ञा भवति सर्वदा पीळा सैव सुहृदाम्प्रयच्छति मुखशोभा कर्णपूरतया चतुरःकला
विलासे नियतम् यश्चादो भवत्यनंगस्य मुक्तागुणस्तु हृदये मुक्तागुण एव
वानितानाम् अगणितनरहयकरिकुलविमर्द्जजनितेन रेणुतुहिनेन आरोपितश
शिमण्डलतादृश्यसहस्रकरविम्बे पटहरवगर्जितोग्रे विकोशनिस्तिशनवि
द्युदाभोगे प्रचरिकुञ्जरजलदे विकालवर्षावतार इव तुंगतुरंगतरंगे प्रच¹

The script in the 8th century shows no doubt some development but in the main the features of the letters of the previous century continue. Noteworthy changes are the diagonal stroke for Grantha *i*, as in the case of *ba*. The right side of *ga*, *tha*, *dha*, *pa*, *na*, *ba*, *ya*, *ṣa*,

¹ Parameśvaravarman with higher vision than all like Parameśvara ; who overcame all like Bharata ; who abandoned everything unworthy (*asamañjasa*) like Sagara who abandoned *Asamañjasa* ; who had well-developed limbs like Karpa who possessed the flourishing country of Anga ; who loved literature (*Kāvya*) like Yayāti who loved *Kāvya* (the *Guru* of Daityas) ; whose command was always an infliction to unsubdued kings but which itself added lustre to the faces of friendly ones being like an ear ornament ; being clever in the lure of arts he was always a moon to Cupid ; with bad qualities removed from his heart he was like a string of pearls on the breasts of women ; with a mist of dust caused by a stampede of innumerable men, horses and elephants creating for the circle of the thousand rayed sun a strange likeness to the lunar disc, fearful with the din of thundering war-drums, unsheathed swords flashing like lightning everywhere, elephants moving like (dark) clouds, as if it were the appearance of rain unseasonal ; tall horses billow-like . . .

ஸ்ரீ கண்டார் காண வலகத்திற்காதல் செய்து நிலலாடுதம் . . .
 ய் | பண்டேய பரமன் படைத்த நாள் பார்த்து நின்று
 நெய்ய தெய் | தண்டார் மூப்பு வளதுன்னைத் | 15 | -
 ர | தளர்ச்செய்து நிலலா முன்னுண் டேல்லுண்டு
 சேன | மிக்கது உலகம் மறிய வைம்மினிய¹ | ய் |

An illustration of the verisimilitude of Grantha script in the Pāṇḍya kingdom with that of the Pallava and Coḷa kingdoms further north, all in the Tamil area, is given in the passage below (Ibid VIII, p. 320). The letters are typical of Tamilnāḍ in the 8th century A.D. Grantha letters, occurring with Vaṭṭeḷuttu (Fig. 127), or by themselves, in pure Sanskrit texts, as in this passage, are the same, though Vaṭṭeḷuttu, which more or less displaced Tamil scripts in the more Southern districts, is a cursory form which in many respects differs from, though based on, Tamil scripts.

நாபதபுரிபாபுலிசாபுத:லி
 டுப்லிஷ்:கிசுகிசபுரிபு
 புாகளாபுபுரிபு:சுகிபு
 பசுகிசாபுபுபுபுபுபுபுபு
 புபுபுபுபுபுபுபுபுபுபுபு

FIG. 127.

C.S. del.

¹ Prosperity | Without attachment to this world where those seen (to-day) are not seen (to-morrow), without brooding over the impending (final) day appointed by the Creator ; before you are worn by old age with its (appendage of) a stick ; if you have anything, enjoy (yourself) and the rest, so give away that the world knows it.

देयं राजभाष्यं करमितिमधुरोन्माधिना शून्यभावाच्चोलेनाज्ञापितै
स्तैरथ नगरजनैरप्यनुज्ञातमेतत् ॥ आयव्ययावथालिख्य चोलानियमना
सिभिः मासक्रमेण चैकैकन्दर्शनीयो कुडुम्बिभिः राजवस्त्रकृतामेषाञ्चतु
र्वाठनिवासिनाम् हरेः कार्यनियुक्तैश्च सार्धमूरकवासिनः ॥ श्री कोपपरा

கேசரி பதராண ஸ்ரீ உத்தம சோழ தேவர்க்கு யாண்டு பதினாறுவது உடை
யார்க்கச்சிப்பேட்டு கோவிலினுள்ளால் தெற்கில் சித்திரமண்டபத்தெழுந்
தருளினிருக்க அதிகாரிகள் சோழமூவேந்த வேளார் எம்பெருமான் இகச்சிப்பேட்டு¹

The development of Grantha and Tamil script in the next century in Cola grants is illustrated in Rājendra Cola's Tiruvālangāḍu plates (Ibid, p. 383). The passage given below (Fig. 129) is from the Sanskrit portion to show Grantha script. The Tiruvālangāḍu plates are the most unique in Indian epigraphy. They are thirty-one large copper sheets strung on a huge ring with a massive seal. No doubt Cola grants are large and heavy, as for instance, the larger Leyden plates, but the Tiruvālangāḍu plates weigh eight maunds, two vissees and twenty palams, being 'nearly three times as heavy as the Paithan records of A.D. 1272 pronounced by Fleet to be an epigraphic curiosity in respect of its weight' (Ibid, p. 383). In this script the serif of the letters undergoes a change in that it overhangs to left eves-like, and the letters are not so very regular and neat, as in Uttama Cola's inscription above. As in the case of *ga*, *ṣa* has also the right arm somewhat enlarged and bent angularly. The remarks about *kha*, *ṭa*, *th'a*, *dha*, *bha*, and *sa* in the previous passage, also apply here.

உதம சோழ தேவர்க்கு யாண்டு பதினாறுவது உடை
யார்க்கச்சிப்பேட்டு கோவிலினுள்ளால் தெற்கில் சித்திரமண்டபத்தெழுந்
தருளினிருக்க அதிகாரிகள் சோழமூவேந்த வேளார் எம்பெருமான் இகச்சிப்பேட்டு¹

FIG. 129.

C.S. del.

¹ Being ordered by Cola the destroyer of Madhura (Madhurāntaka) that in consideration of their poverty no taxes like royal dues should be levied it was also authorized by those city magnates. The house-holders living in Colāniyama along with the managers of the temple of Hari situated in Ūraka should individually prepare monthly accounts of income and expenditure and show them to the royal weavers living in the four quarters. In the 16th year of the prosperous king *Parakesāri-varman* alias Śrī Uttama Coladeva, when (this) Lord was pleased to be present in the Citra-maṇḍapa hall to the south within the palace at Kaccippeḍu the officer *Colamūvendaveḷār* (requested) the king that (for the deity) of this Kaccippeḍu . . .

ஹஸ்தீ ஸ்ரீ திருமணனி வளர இருநிலமடந்தையும் பொறசய
பபாவையும சீராதநிசசெலவியும தனபெருந்தெவீயராகி
இண்புறநெடுதியள் ஊழியுள இடைதுறைநாடும் துடர்
வனவெலிப்படரவனவாசியும் சுளனிசுழுமதினகொளனி ¹

A further stage of development is reached in the later Coḷa inscriptions and the beginnings are already seen in the records of Rājendra Coḷa Kulottunga who combined the Coḷa and Cālukyan sovereignties in the third quarter of the 11th century. The following passage (Fig. 131) is from a late inscription of his at Tirukaḷukkunram, dated in the beginning of the 12th century A.D. (Ibid III, p. 164). The letters tend to become more angular and the general mould is rectangular. There is no letter that has not a clear horizontal base, including even *u* and *ṭa*. In *i* the tail tends to encircle its body. *Ya* is more or less like E laid on its back. The overhanging serif becomes more marked.

ஹஸ்தீ ஸ்ரீ திருமணனி வளர இருநிலமடந்தையும் பொறசய
பபாவையும சீராதநிசசெலவியும தனபெருந்தெவீயராகி
இண்புறநெடுதியள் ஊழியுள இடைதுறைநாடும் துடர்
வனவெலிப்படரவனவாசியும் சுளனிசுழுமதினகொளனி

FIG. 131.

C.S. del.

ஹஸ்தீ ஸ்ரீ புகழ்குடிபுணரி அகழ் குழிசுபுவியில
பொன நெமி அளவுணன நெயிநடப்ப விளங்கு
ஐய மகளிளங்கோப்பருவத்து சசகரகோட்டத்
துவிக்கிரமத்தொழிலால புதுமணம் புணர்ந்து ²

¹ Hail ! Prosperity ! In (his) life of great prosperity (during which he) rejoiced that while fortune having become constant was increasing, the goddess of the great earth, the goddess of victory in battle, and the matchless goddess of fame had become his great queens (conquered with his great and war-like army) Iḍaituraināḍu, Vanuvāśi whose warriors (were protected by) walls of continuous forest, Kolḷippākkai whose walls were surrounded by Sullī trees . . .

² Hail ! Prosperity ! while his wheel (of authority) went as far as the golden circle (Mount Meru) on the earth, surrounded by the moat of the sea which was surrounded by (his) fame (the king) newly wedded the brilliant goddess of victory, while still heir apparent, by deed of valour at Sakkarakoṭṭam.

भुवः प्रेमपरिध्वंगपुलकाङ्कि
 तबाहवे । नमो वराहवपु
 षे श्रीवैभवपुषे त्विषे । व
 न्देनन्तफणाभूषां स्यन्दन
 म्मरुघन्वनः । मेदिनी हरिदोस्तम्
 भमेघनादानुलासिनीम् । आ
 सीत् सोमान्वये रम्ये यदुः पर
 मधार्मिकः । अंशावतीर्णो यद्वं
 शे भगवान् पद्मलोचनः । त
 त्कृले संगमो राजां समभूत् ¹

As Grantha and Tamil were used together the former for expressing Sanskrit passages and Sanskrit terms occurring in Tamil inscription, so Grantha and Vaṭṭeḷuttu were used in the extreme south of the Peninsula. Vaṭṭeḷuttu is a form of cursory Tamil written in a peculiar slanting way, and as it had an independent development, the letters differ to a certain extent in their general features with greater resemblance in such letters as *a*, *ā*, *u*, *e*, *ka*, *pa*, *ra*, *la* and *va*, but less of it in letters like *ṭa* and *ma*, and in some cases by their peculiarly different shape as for instance in *i*, *ṇa*, *ta*, *na* and *ya*, though the ultimate common origin can easily be traced. Pāṇḍya, Cera and some Coḷa inscriptions are engraved in this

¹ May that Primal (deity, i.e., Vināyaka), the destroyer of darkness of obstacles, the offspring of the primal couple and the rich in kindness without a peer, increase (our) prosperity. I bow to him (Śiva) the left half of whose body is entirely composed of mercy, who is adorned by excellent virtue, who has the moon's digit for ornament and the three lights (sun, moon and fire) for his eyes. Salutation to that lustre (Varāhamūrti) in the form of a Boar, whose hand is marked by horripilation by the loving embrace of Bhū (the earth), and who enhances the glory of Śrī (Prosperity) I bow to Medinī (earth), the jewel on the hoods of Ananta, the chariot of (Śiva) the bowmen who carries Mount Meru as his bow, the peahen on the pillar-like arm of Viṣṇu. In the pleasant lunar race was born the supremely righteous Yadu in whose family the lotus-eyed Lord (Viṣṇu) was born as an incarnation (Kṛṣṇa). In that family King Saṅgama was born.

script, and the passage chosen (Fig. 133) is from Pāṇḍya Parāntaka's inscription of the 8th century A.D. (Ibid VIII, p. 320). It is interesting that all medial vowel signs are added before and after in the same line and not above or below in Vaṭṭeḷuttu. In early Vaṭṭeḷuttu letters as given here are nearer to Tamil letters than the later ones.

ஸதாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா
 நாநாநாநாநாநாநாநா

FIG. 133.

C.S. del.

1) சோமார்ஞ்சடையர்கு உ
 ததரமகி களக்குடிவை
 டுந மூவேந்தமங்கப
 பேரையன ஆகிய மாந்ங்
 காரி இக்கற்றளி செயது
 நீரத்தனியா தேய ஸ்ரீ-ரொ
 ஹண்ணு செயது பிள்ளை அவ ன்னை
 னுக்கு அநுஜ உத்தர
 சீகரவடி மேயதின பாண்டி
 மங்கல விசை அறையன
 ஆகிய மாரனனே இ
 னனமுகமண்டமஞ்செ
 யிது நீர் ததனித்தான¹

¹ Mārāṅgāri alias Vaidyan Muvendamangalapperaraiyan of Kalakkudi, the prime minister of king Mārāṅja-
 dayan, made this stone temple and ascended heaven without consecrating it. Later his younger brother Mārāneyan
 alias Pāṇḍimaṅgalavisiyairaiyan, who attained to the position of prime minister made this *Mukhamandapa* and
 consecrated (the shrine).

APPENDIX.

INSCRIPTIONS IN THE EPIGRAPHICAL BAYS OF THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SECTION OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM.

The collection of copper-plates and inscribed slabs in the Madras Museum is probably the richest in India. The need for exhibiting in a worthy manner typical inscriptions of various dates and scripts occurring in South India was keenly felt and the result is the epigraphical bays in the mezzanine floor of the new Archaeological extension. Here the scheme of arrangement is to show the development of Brāhmī from the earliest times to the 4th century A.D. in one bay, that of Tamil Grantha from the earliest times to the latest phase in the next, that of Canarese Telugu in the bay beyond it and in the last the development of Nāgarī. In addition to the actual inscriptions and some plaster casts, originals of which could not be obtained or exhibited with safety, there is a chart given in each bay to show the various stages in the development of the script. A general label explains the development of scripts as such in India with special reference to the South Indian variety, and in each bay the history of the particular script is stressed, individual labels beneath each exhibit explaining its significance.

The huge collection, comprising mostly copper-plate grants, is partly classified, catalogued and arranged according to dynasties and kept in the reserve collection, along with subsequent additions, which have been entered and described in accession registers, but which await classification and cataloguing with adequate descriptions. Many of the large collection of inscribed stone slabs are arranged in the shed and form a rich and valuable reserve collection, while a selection from these is exhibited in the bays of the epigraphical gallery.

In the Brāhmī bay the first exhibit is a cast of an Aśokan edict from Jaugaḍa, showing the letters in the time of the great Mauryan emperor (pl. V-a). The next is a cast from one of the inscribed Bhaṭṭiprolu reliquary lids. The original itself is exhibited in the Buddhist gallery and one interested in the original can well have a look at it there (pl. V-b, c). The peculiar features of the Bhaṭṭiprolu script deserve special attention and the importance of this exhibit is obvious. The next is an original slab from Amarāvati, an upright from the rail giving the name of a guild from Dhānyakaṭa, modern Amarāvati, inscribed in letters of the 2nd century B.C. (pl. VI-a). A further stage of development of Brāhmī is illustrated by an inscription composed of beautiful elongate letters, also from Amāravati (pl. VI-b). As the best specimens of this elaborate ornamental lettering come from Jaggayyapeṭa and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, an inscribed slab from Jaggayyapeṭa is given next (pl. VI-c). The final development of Brāhmī script, before it changes into the type which is the parent of the Telugu-Canarese and Tamil-Grantha, is shown by a cast of the first plate from a grant of Pallava Śivaskandavarman issued from Kāñci. The chart which comes next shows the various stages of the development in greater detail.

In the next, the Tamil-Grantha bay, the first exhibit is another cast of the Aśokan edict. The next is a small fragment of an inscription from Amarāvati of the 2nd century A.D., showing the development of Brāhmī five centuries later. The development of Brāhmī having been more elaborately dealt with in the previous bay, the development of Tamil Grantha script from Brāhmī is dealt with in greater detail here. Seventh century Grantha script, as it occurs in the inscriptions of Rājasimha at the Kailāsanātha temple in Kañci-puram, is illustrated by a small fragment from Kāñcīpuram (pl. VII-a). Further development during the time of Nandivarman Pallavamalla of later Pallava palaeography is shown next by a small slab kindly presented to the Museum by my friend Mr. M. K. Srinivasa Mudaliar, Zamindar of Manali. The development of this script both in Grantha and in Tamil is beautifully illustrated in the stone inscription of Rājarāja from Kalambākkam, Chingleput district, which is in excellent state of preservation (pl. VIII)*. The final phase of development of Tamil-Grantha is illustrated by a cast of a Vijayanagar inscription which shows the script not very different from that of today. The chart which comes next contains, as in the Brāhmī bay, a more detailed study of this development.

In the Canarese-Telugu bay which comes next, the first two exhibits are the casts of the Aśokan inscription and a fragment of an inscription from Amarāvati in the same order as in the previous bay, as the early development of the script is the same in both the areas where these two types of scripts develop later. The inscribed slabs are arranged in two rows one above and the other below to show the simultaneous development of the script in the eastern or Telugu area and the western or the Canarese area. For showing the development of the script in the Telugu region, an early inscribed slab with no particular date but which can be assigned to the early years of the Eastern Cālukyan dynasty is shown.† The next is an inscribed slab from Addanki of the 9th century (pl. X-a). This is an important one from the point of view of both palaeography and literature. This inscription is clear proof of Telugu poetry of the 9th century A.D., though unfortunately no literary work of a date earlier than the *Mahābhārata* of Nannaya Bhaṭṭa, the poet laureate of the Eastern Cālukyan king Rājarāja of the 11th century A.D., except Nannecoḍa's *Kumārasambhava* of the 10th century A.D., has yet been discovered. The beginnings of Telugu poetry are to be sought in the inscriptions, and the Addanki stone inscription being earlier than the Bezvada pillar inscription of Yuddhamalla, which itself is a century earlier than Nannaya, is specially noteworthy. Paṇḍaraṅga, who is mentioned in this inscription, was the minister of Guṇagavijayāditya III. The next inscribed slab is of the 11th century and shows the type of letters used during Rājarāja's time (pl. X-b). After this comes a cast showing the development of Telugu during the early years of Vijayanagara rule in the 14th century (pl. X-c).

The development in the Canarese districts is illustrated by a carved slab showing a warrior in a panel with inscriptions on the border to the sides and top. The inscription,

* Early Cola script is also illustrated in pl. VII-b and pl. IX-ab,

† An early Eastern Cālukyan dvārapāla, inscribed on the back, is displayed in the gallery (pl. IX-c).

which is partly mutilated, is of the time of Vikramāditya, the Western Cālukyan king of the Bādāmi line (pl. XI-a). This is probably the only Western Cālukyan inscription of an early date on stone found in the Madras Province. The next is a cast of a portion of a Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscription from a bathing pedestal from Dānavulapāḍu of the 10th century A.D. The next is a large inscription of the later Western Cālukyan king Vikramāditya VI (pl. XI-b). The final development in both areas being the same in the Vijayanagara period, the same cast of the inscription of the Vijayanagara period serves the purpose for the script development in the Canarese area as well. Beyond this, there is a chart showing the development of both Canarese and Telugu from Brāhmī during the centuries.

In the Nāgarī bay, after the Aśokan cast, there is space allotted for a cast of a Kuṣāṇa inscription to be acquired from the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The next stage of development is illustrated by a cast of the Eran inscription of Samudragupta. Coming from Central India, it exhibits certain special features in the letters, namely, the box-head and the nail-head. The next is an original slab with an inscription in Nāgarī of the 7th century A.D., exactly as it occurs in the Kailāsanātha temple (pl. XII-a). This Pallava inscription should be assigned to the time of Parameśvaravarman, for, though most of it is obliterated, I have been able to read a line or two which follow the Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman. The next is an original slab from near Mukhalingam of the time of Anantavarman Coḍa-ganga (pl. XII-b). This shows the type of Nāgarī prevalent in the Kalinga area in the 11th century A.D., and the Pallava slab shows letters with features similar to the Nāgarī type prevalent in North India at the time. The final stage of development of Nāgarī in South India as seen in the Nandināgarī inscriptions of the Vijayanagara monarchs is illustrated by a cast of a copper plate (pl. XII-c). Beyond this, there is a chart illustrating the development of the script.

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PLATES

PLATE I

Table showing the spread of Indian scripts abroad.

[illegible]

PLATE II

- (a) The Tiruvālangāḍu plates of Rājendra Coḷa.**
- (b) Seal of the Tiruvālangāḍu plates of Rājendra Coḷa.**



(a)

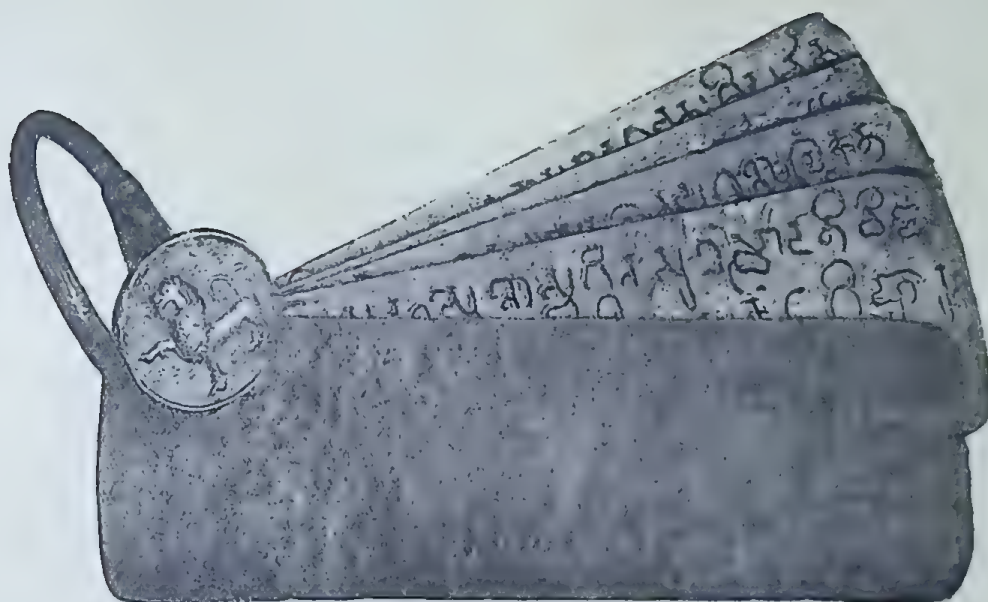
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(b)

PLATE III

- (a) The Cikkulla plates of Viṣṇukunḍi Vikramendravarman II.
- (b) Seal of the Cikkulla plates.
- (c) Seal of an Eastern Cālukyan copper plate grant.



(a)



(b)

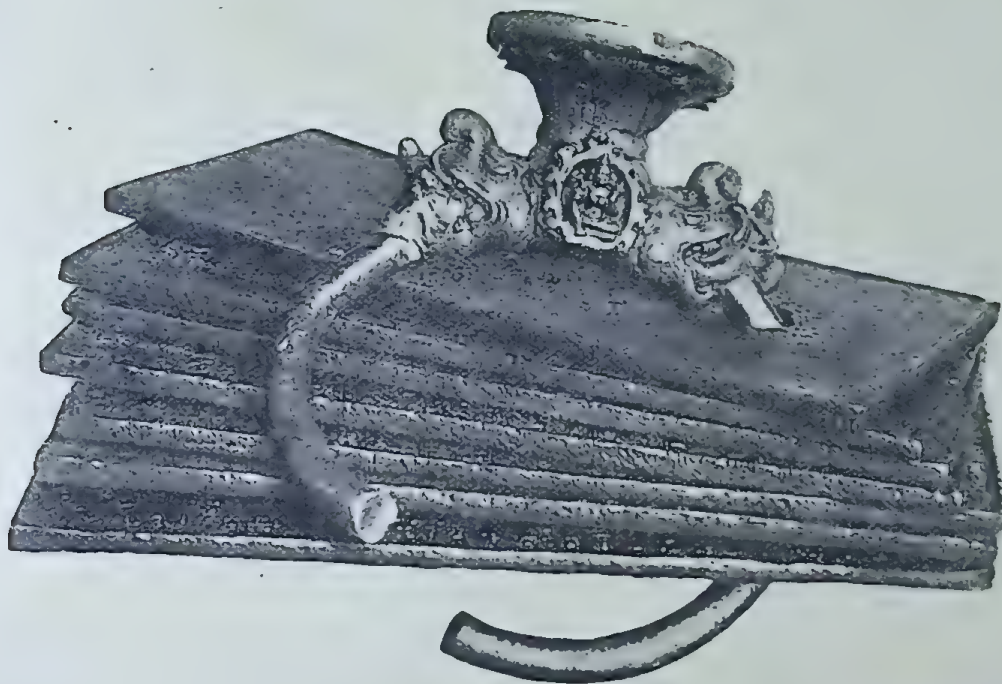
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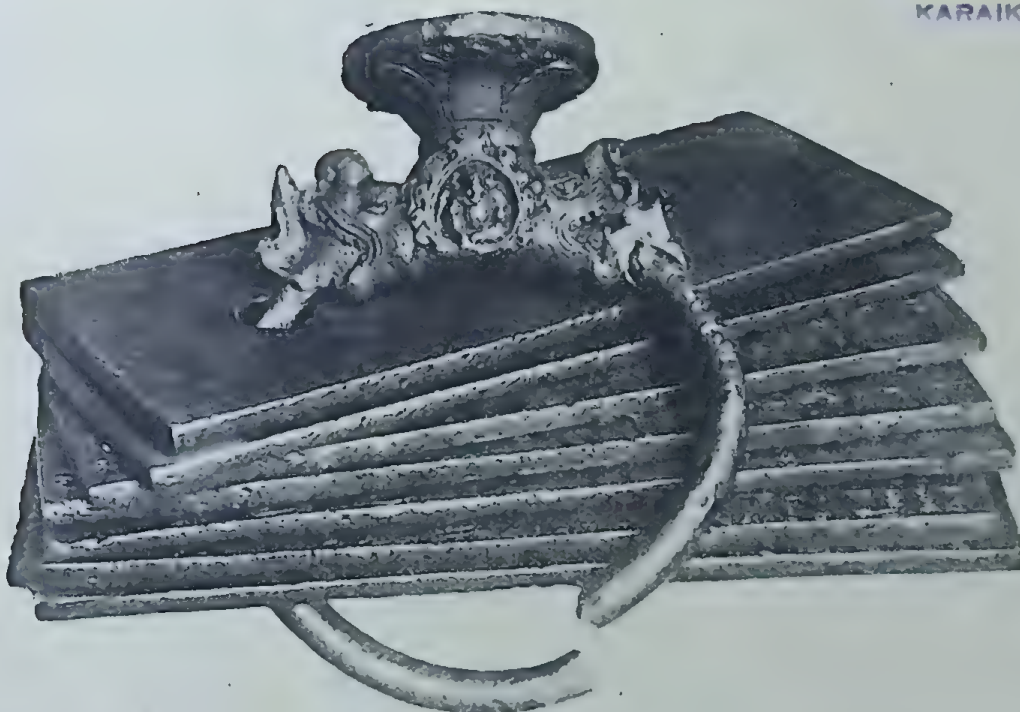
PLATE IV

(a), (b) Copper plate grant of the Eastern Cālukyan King Vijayāditya III from Sātalūr, Krishna district (9th Century A.D.).



(a)

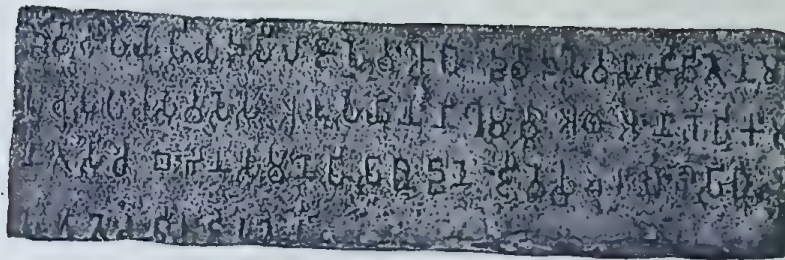
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(b)

PLATE V

- (a) Cast of Aśokan edict at Jaugaḍa.
- (b) Inscribed lid of stone reliquary from Bhaṭṭiprolu.
- (c) Inscribed stone reliquary from Bhaṭṭiprolu.



(a)



(b)

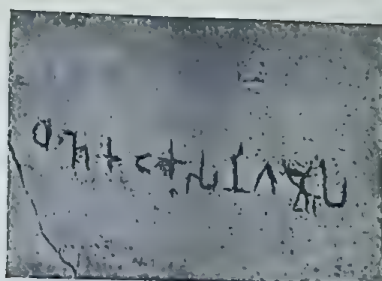
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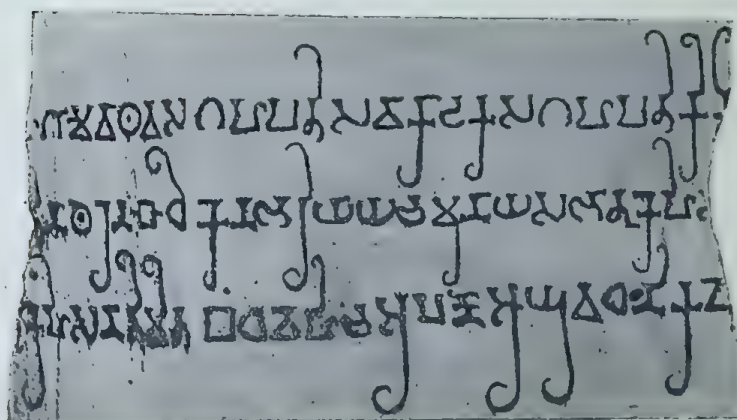
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PLATE VI

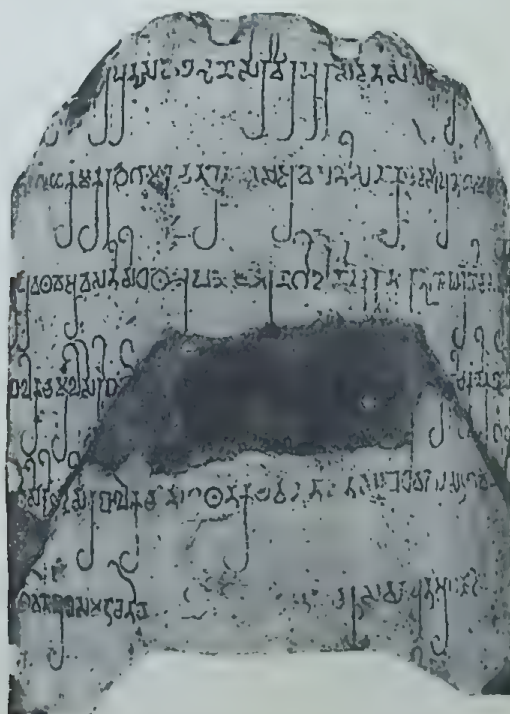
- (a) Inscripton from Amaravatī (C. 200 B.C.).
- (b) Inscription from Amarāvati (Late 2nd Century A.D.).
- (c) Inscription from Jaggayyapeta (3rd Century A.D.).



(a)



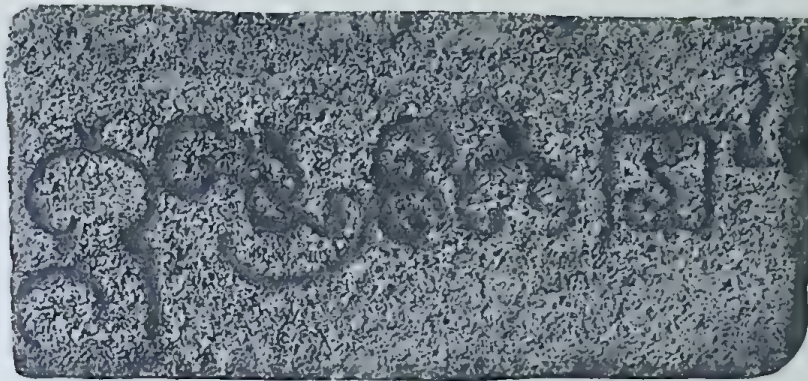
(b)



(c)

PLATE VII

- (a) Pallava Grantha inscription from Kāñcīpuram (7th Century A.D.).
- (b) Coḷa inscription on a hero stone from Kilmuttugūr, North Arcot district (10th Century A.D.).



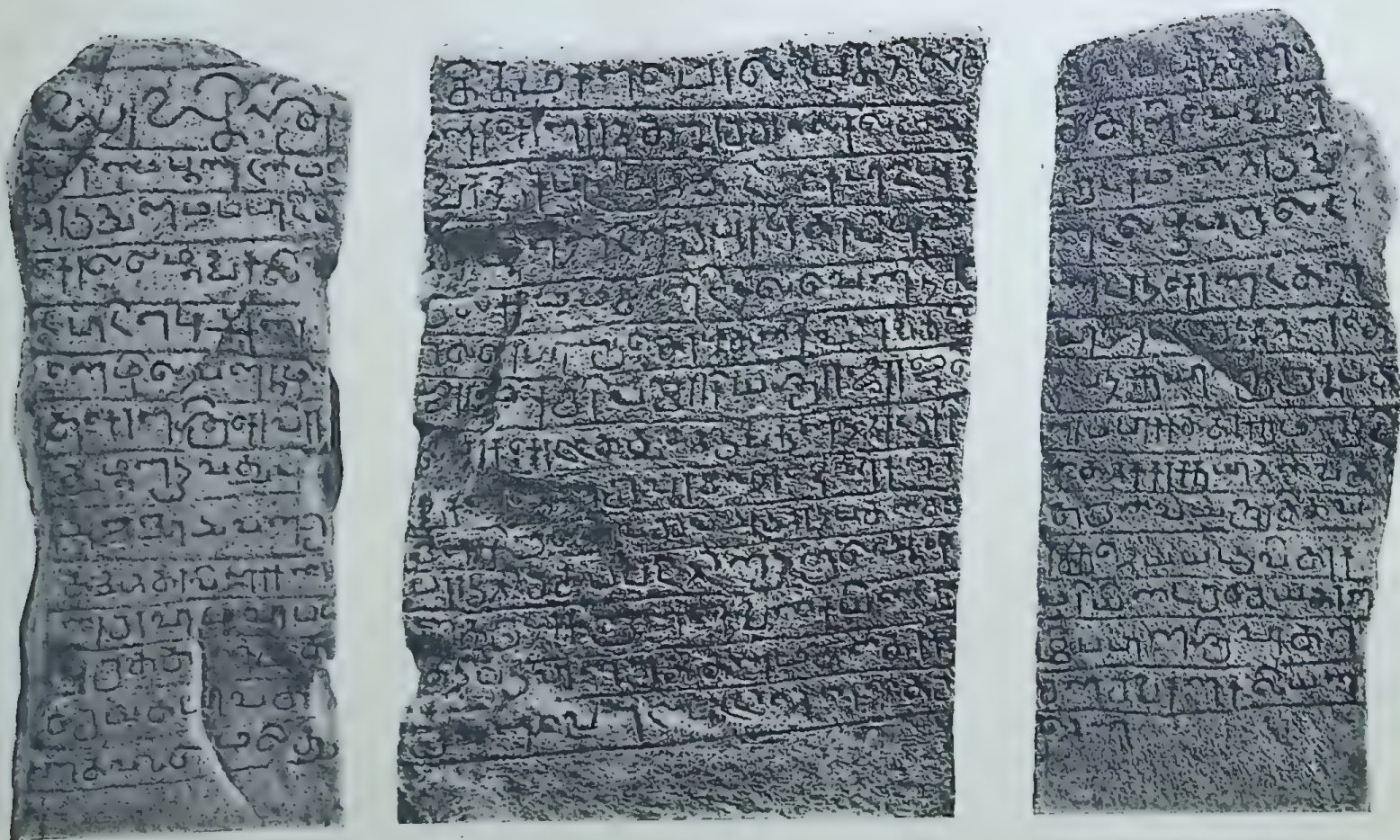
(a)



(b)

PLATE VIII

(a), (b), (c) Cola inscription of Rājarāja from Kalambākkam, Chingleput district (11th Century A.D.).



(a)

(b)

(c)

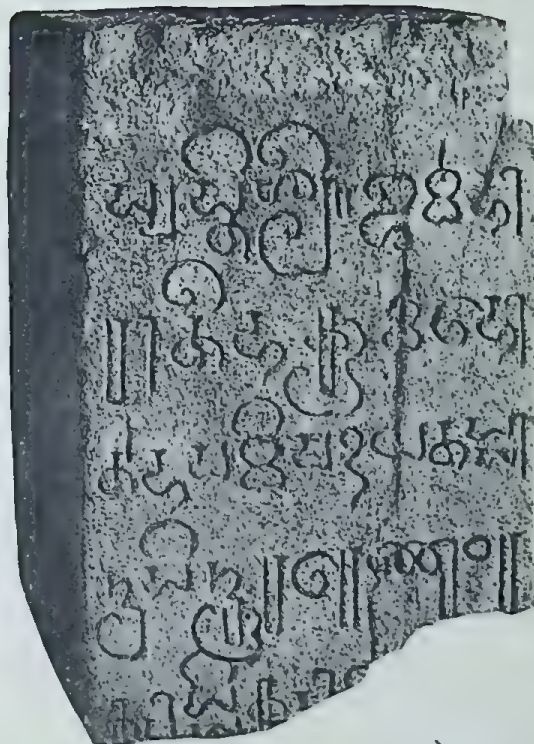
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PLATE IX

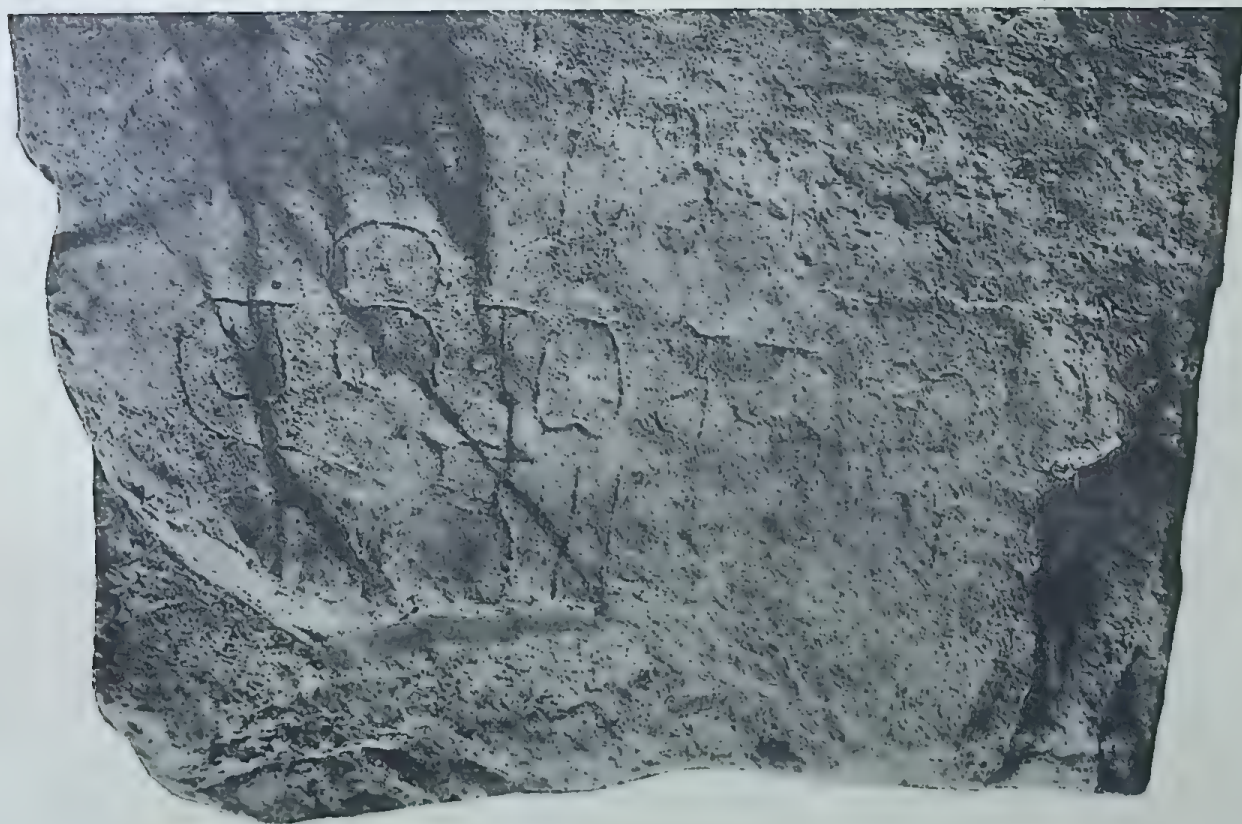
- (a) Inscription of Pārthivendravarma from Madras (10th Century A.D.).
- (b) *Sūryasataka* in Coḷa Grantha on a pillar from a derelict Sūryamaṇḍapa in [Kacchapeśvara temple, Kāñcipuram (10th Century A.D.)
- (c) Early Eastern Cālukyan inscription on the back of a *dvārapālaka* from Bezwada.



(a)



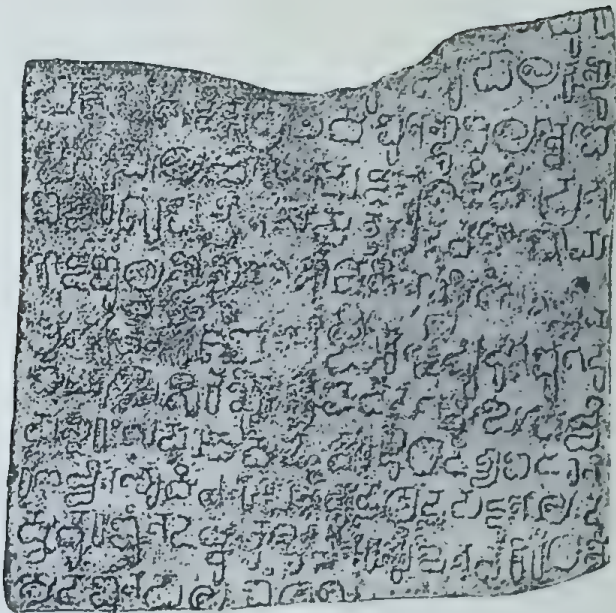
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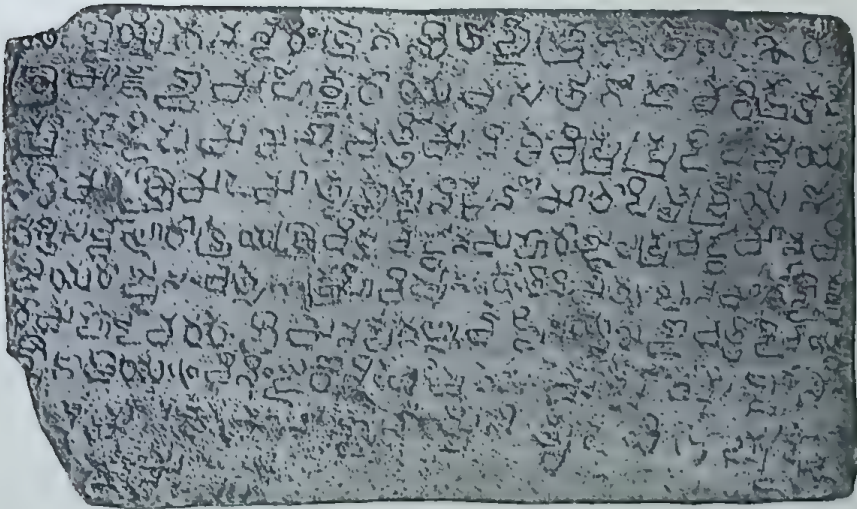
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PLATE X

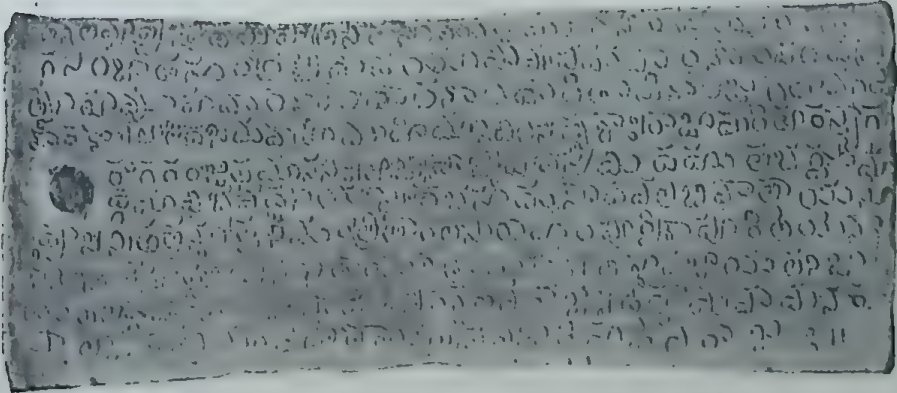
- (a) Early Eastern Cālukyan inscription from Addanki, Guntur district (9th Century A.D.).
- (b) Later Eastern Cālukyan inscription from Rajahmundry, East Godavari district (11th Century A.D.).
- (c) Cast of Vijayanagara copper plate (15th Century A.D.).



(a)



(b)



(c)

PLATE XI

(a) Early Western Cālukyan inscribed carving from Annavara agrahāram, Nellore district (7th Century A.D.).

(b) Later Western Cālukyan inscription (11th Century A.D.).



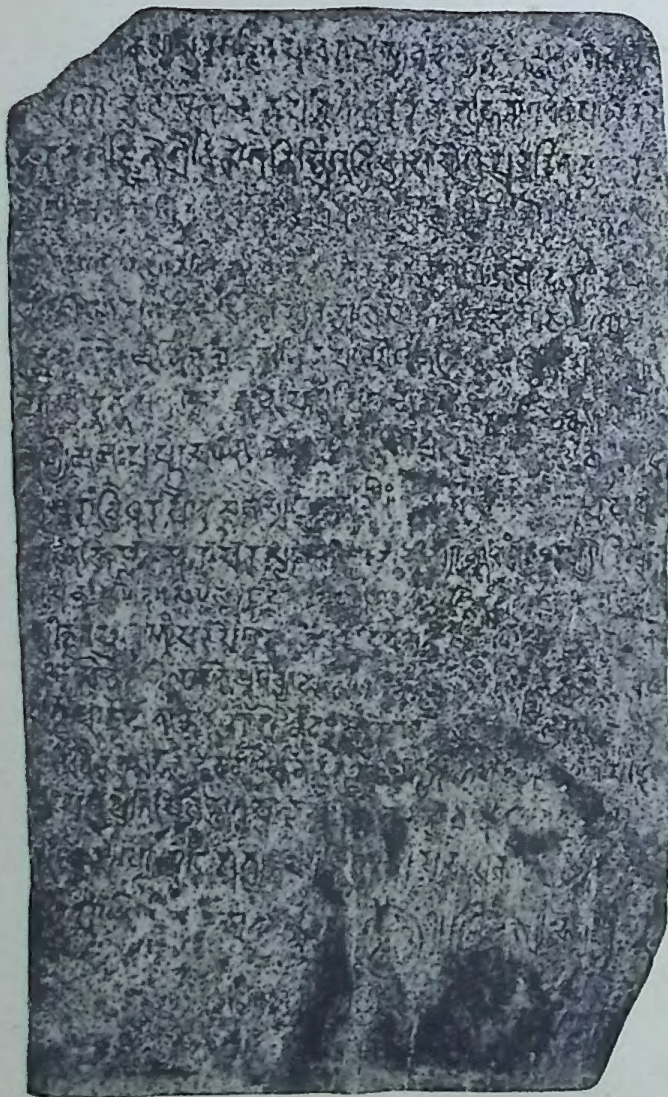
(a)



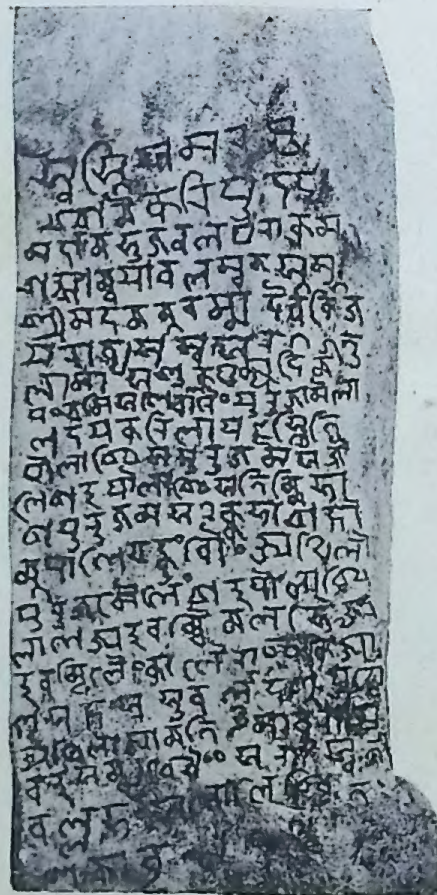
(b)

PLATE XII

- (a) Pallava Nāgari inscription from Kāñcīpuram, Chingleput district (7th Century A.D.).
- (b) Eastern Ganga Nāgari inscription from Urajam, Viśākhapaṭṇam district (11th Century A.D.).
- (c) Vijayanagara Nandināgari inscription on copper plate (15th Century A.D.).



(a)



(b)



(c)

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